

# PRODUCED BY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // AUGUST | SEPTEMBER 2020

PRODUCERS MARK:  
NOW STREAMING  
ON A TV NEAR YOU

P. 18

5 WOMEN PRODUCERS  
BRINGING POWERFUL  
VOICES TO ANIMATION

P. 32

POUNDING THE PAVEMENT  
IN THE PANDEMIC ERA

P. 48



INCLUSION,  
INNOVATION  
AND NEW  
OCCUPATIONS  
IN THE AGE  
OF COVID

## KEN BURNS

"I CAN COUNT ON THE FINGERS  
OF ONE HAND THE FILMS (WE'VE  
MADE) THAT DON'T DEAL WITH  
RACE. IT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT  
THING THAT WE DEAL WITH."

# Drawing US IN

HOW FIVE FEMALE ANIMATION PRODUCERS MAKE UNIVERSAL STORIES MORE UNIVERSAL

WRITTEN BY KATIE GRANT

What do you get when five female animation producing powerhouses gather virtually for a roundtable discussion? You get to find out how they break barriers and bust through glass ceilings. You learn how they find new voices and nurture them. And you get to see how they make their stories and storytellers more inclusive. Black, of color, underrepresented, oppressed, marginalized, young, old, any and all genders—these are some of the voices that Bonnie Arnold, Jinko Gotoh, Kelly Kulchak, Karen Rupert Toliver and Kori Rae strive to bring to their animation screens both big and small, in front of and behind the camera. And, as Gotoh puts it, they utilize these voices to make “powerful animated movies or series with a theme that transcends to all generations.”

Longtime animation veteran Bonnie Arnold was tasked with creating and moderating this panel of women who

could represent those differences, and she came through with what she called “The Six Degrees of Separation of Bonnie Arnold.” Arnold began as Harrison Ford’s location scout driver for *The Mosquito Coast*, which filmed in her home state of Georgia. Decades later, she is now President of Feature Animation at DreamWorks Animation, with movies like *Toy Story* and *How to Train Your Dragon* under her belt. She is also an active member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and





Sciences and has worked with each of the panelists at some point in her career. She successfully burst the old boys' club bubble of animation where she used to "pretend to act like one of the boys. It was fine. That's what you had to do. But it's nice now to be in environments where you can be you. You can be yourself."

Creating those environments is something all these producers agree is necessary for telling truly inclusive, universal stories. Women, people of color, and even just quiet crew members need to know their voices are heard and, more importantly, are welcome. Kori Rae of Pixar Animation and, most recently, producer of *Onward*, says part of her work as a producer is getting new voices heard. "The key is to get them to talk and to get their ideas out there. I have had to literally referee, in a good way, to make sure that the women's voices were heard just at the table." She breaks her storytellers out into smaller groups at times so women in particular will feel more comfortable speaking up and sharing their good ideas. "Because they're probably intimidated, especially when they're relatively new, fresh out of school. It's painful to watch. They just don't want to speak up."

Karen Rupert Toliver, Senior Vice President of Creative at Sony and Academy Award winner for the short *Hair Love*, relayed her experience working on that project about a young black father trying to do his daughter's hair: "To be in a room where it was mostly Black people, I've never had that experience in my whole career. We could talk about the material and the subject matter, what we wanted out of it, in a really honest, very raw way." That sense of community, once created, however, needs to be nurtured. Toliver has seen good talent get hired and then leave all too soon because they were not listened to. She says it takes "making sure that there's some caretaker on every production who's ensuring that when women and people of color come in they feel cared for throughout and that they're heard. I think we can do that a lot better."

A transfer from live action producing to TV animation, Kelly Kulchak is now Head of Current Programming at DreamWorks Animation. She adds that having a diversity consultant on projects fosters an atmosphere of inclusion. She is currently working on a *Jurassic Park* series with a young black male lead and had the consultant affirm that they were indeed creating a character who was a strong leader. But, she says, "It's almost easier to have that diversity in front of the camera, have it in those characters. I feel like we're making good strides in that, but it's the behind the scenes, it's finding those voices, that you can have contribute as well."

And find fresh voices, they do. Gotoh, a producer and consultant (*Dinosaur*, *Finding Nemo*, *The Little Prince*, *The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part*) and Vice President of Women in Animation, is also known for creating a 43% female crew for the Netflix feature *Klaus*. The way she did it, though, is even more admirable. She sought out animation students and an international group to make the movie in Spain—where the director, Sergio Pablos, is from—by looking first at their skills and talent, not their gender. After that process, the ratio played in favor of an almost half-female crew. But she doesn't stop there: "I'm super excited we got to the top. We can feed the pipeline. Now we just have to do it. We have to keep a sustainable model to make that change so that all these

**"It's nice now to be in environments where you can be yourself," says panel moderator Bonnie Arnold, producer of *How to Train Your Dragon*.**

women and people of color and people from different countries can all succeed.”

Keeping that model sustainable can happen by “surrounding her for success,” adds Kulchak. When working on the series *She-Ra*, Kulchak provided an experienced team and an all-female writing staff to help creator Noelle Stevenson feel comfortable becoming the leader she needed to be. “We need to take chances on these young voices and surround them with experienced people so they are set up for success. That’s our job. I think what’s really important for us is not just hiring them but making sure that we protect them.”

Protecting these voices also means taking chances and risk. This particular group of women seem to be comfortable with risk, and Toliver offers one reason why. “I think stories can come from all sorts of places. The thing we know is, you feel like you’re taking a shot with someone new. And it feels like it’s more so when you’re taking a shot with a woman or with a person of color. But you’re taking a shot with a white man also—it just doesn’t feel like such a shot. I think that’s where we’re trying to check ourselves in terms of what’s a known quantity of something that’s going to work and what is a real risk.”

One thing no one in this group is willing to risk is the quality of the stories they tell. As Rae shares, “What I used to think was a cliché that Pete Docter and Andrew Stanton always said is that, ‘We make our movies for ourselves. We’re our first audience. We are the most important audience because we sit with it for five years before anybody gets to see it.’ It still is true, but it’s shifting to more on the diversity front than thinking about making films for kids.”

And when Kulchak made the transition from live action to animation—admitting she had no experience there—all that mattered to Margorie Cohn, who brought her in, was story. “She asked, ‘Well, what’s important to you about live action?’ And I said, ‘Story and character.’ She said, ‘Me too.’ And she trusted me because I had multiple years working in production that I would pick up on the animation production pipeline.” She adds, “People

want to get invested in a character, in a story, in a journey, and, to me, that’s the responsibility—can you tell a great story? You want characters that are deep and varied and unique, that a kid can just use their imagination on.”

That’s where story can take its place at the head of the table for change. As Gotoh says, “I think people are open to different types of stories. In the past it was, ‘OK, we want to tell North American or American stories, and you can bring different voices.’ But now there are opportunities where you can bring different types of

compelled to do that for others. Kulchak says, “It comes to us, it comes to other women, to reach down and help others up.” How else, some might wonder, could you become a leader in animation? Arnold offers, “I think, as producers, we’re seen as the leader of the crews. But a lot of people don’t understand there are so many things that go on behind the scenes. There’s the studio and then there’s the director and sometimes the director is a woman, but sometimes it’s a man. None of us calls all the shots all the time, whether you’re an executive or the

---

“WE HAVE TO KEEP A SUSTAINABLE MODEL TO MAKE THAT CHANGE SO THAT ALL THESE WOMEN AND PEOPLE OF COLOR AND PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES CAN ALL SUCCEED.”

---



The women of animation, clockwise from top left: Bonnie Arnold, Kelly Kulchak, Kori Rae, Karen Rupert Toliver, Jinko Gotoh

stories from different parts of the world and put them in a three-act structure that plays to the global audience. I think we can learn from both sides, all sides.”

Each of these women—who do come from all sides—got a hand, leg or foot up the professional ladder, and now feel

producer.” Getting to the level where you do call some of the shots some of the time is tough. One way to get there is through short films, which Arnold calls “the entry point for a lot of underrepresented groups to get their feet wet.”

Rae highlights the internal program at





Pixar's Spark Shorts is "finding ways for people to tell their stories in their own way," says Kori Rae, producer of *Onward*.

Pixar—Spark Shorts—which was created to find undiscovered talent in animation and up-and-coming talent like Domee Shi of the Academy Award-winning short *Bao*. "These shorts can have restrained budgets and are quite often made after hours. It's unbelievable to see how many people have already come out of that. People who were from documentaries, people who were coming from all aspects of production, not just story. That was an important step to make, because we kept trying to get non-story artists into directing roles and it was always such a large leap.

"So it's taking these bite-sized pieces and finding ways for people to tell their stories in their own way. We even opened it up to any type of animation you want, including 2D or sand animation. We also came up with a new role—associate executive producer—in an effort to get potential female leaders at the studio and other people of color who haven't really been in leadership before, to get them exposed to all aspects of filmmaking." Citing her experience producing *Hair Love* from scratch, Toliver adds, "These shorts with micro budgets, where you don't get to overthink it in the way that all of our movies get overthought, are really a blessing."

At DreamWorks, the focus is on giving opportunities "so that they can grow with you," says Kulchak. She continues,

"A lot of times those big positions, those executive producers aren't available. So you want to be able to give someone the opportunity to grow in that job. I think that's another place that we have to focus on. It's not just writers and directors, but it's production assistants. It's that kid who can start and grow the way a lot of us did in the industry, and work their way up."

Once in the door, though, it's best if female or minority recruits don't feel alone. "It's really hard when you're the only one," Toliver warns. "It takes a certain personality to be the only one. Certain types of women or people of color just don't want that environment, so they may just opt out. I think trying to make sure that there are two and three and more, and they can have a community, is kind of a watershed thing."

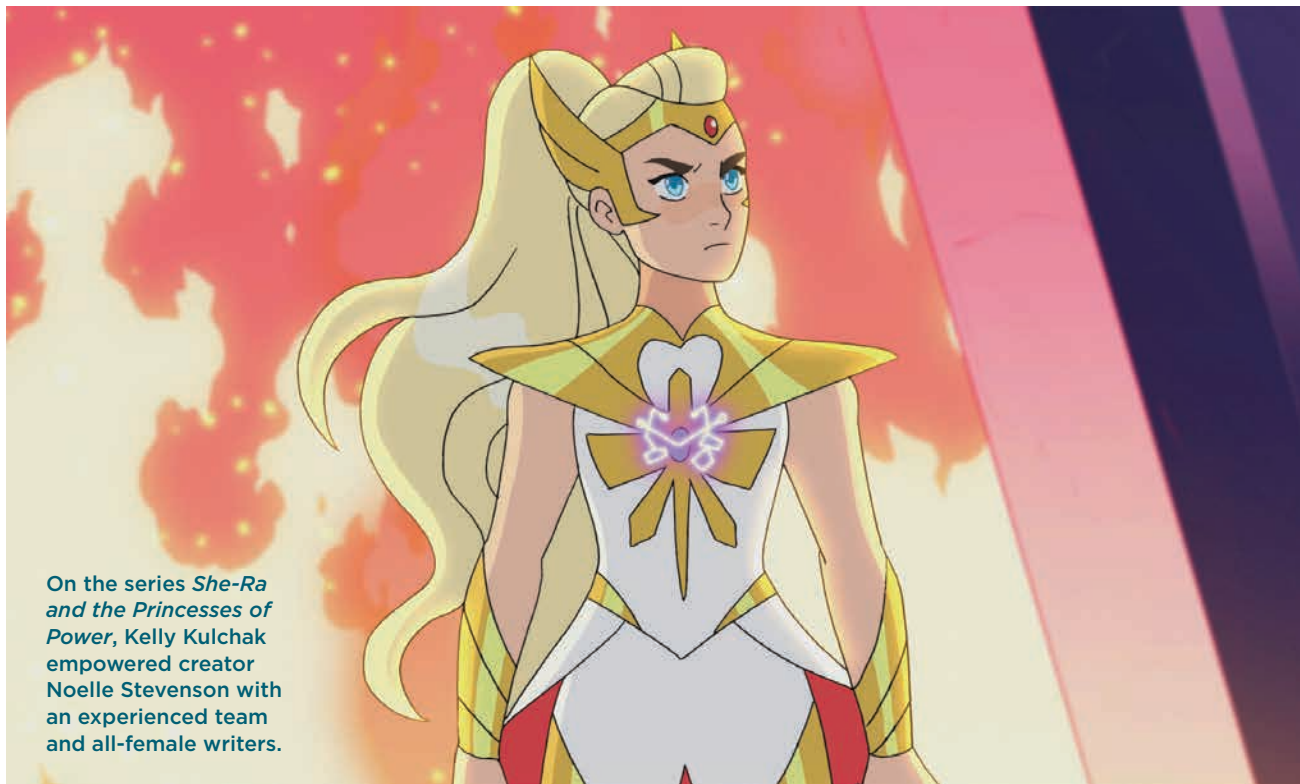
Geena Davis' Institute on Gender in Media was mentioned more than once during this conversation—specifically her notion and tagline of "If she can see it, she can be it," and the responsibility felt to uphold that. Toliver takes it step further: "I think about the empathy of understanding and what it's like to be marginalized. But there are other kinds of stories and other depths or shifts of perception that I think we can do. Kids would understand that probably even better than adults. Those are the places

where I think we can keep pushing the boundaries. It's the evolution of 'If you can see it, you can be it,' but showing more of the possibility of understanding how we're connected."

That connection is at once being challenged and nurtured during the time of this pandemic. In one sense, these women noted how they can now work with a wider net of international talent since everyone is working from home. But they do miss the ideas that happened on the fly in the hallways, by the water cooler or in the ladies' room lounges. They voiced concerns about new hires not feeling like part of a team they've never met in person, and technical issues such as sending large files where lighting and sound work come in. But they are all making the best of working remotely.

Rae mentions Pixar's new film, *Soul*, being virtually complete, with Pete Docter at Skywalker Studios "sitting in the theater by himself listening to" the finished product. She adds, "As producers, our skill set is heavy in planning and making the case for every eventuality. We find ourselves in react-and-respond mode because there's very little planning you can do in this scenario. It's got everybody a little on their back feet, and just really working hour to hour, day to day."

In the end, it's the ability to challenge



On the series *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power*, Kelly Kulchak empowered creator Noelle Stevenson with an experienced team and all-female writers.

when they get told no that helps these female producers keep going. As Toliver puts it, “The funny thing—the blessing and the curse for all of us—is that our experience means we have expectations. We’ve been told no a certain kind of way. There are all kinds of assumptions about how we would tell our stories that we have to unwind.

“I think that’s where really looking to the newcomers and letting them help us can change our storytelling. In my brain I think, ‘OK, I know we didn’t do this before, I know I fought for this before. I know I got noes before, but now the noes are not being accepted anymore.’ The more we just don’t accept them, and we keep asking questions and we push—I think that’s how we’re going to really change the look of the crews.

“I think that’s why shorts or other access points with lower risk will be the way that we can say, ‘Wait a minute. This worked in this way. So we can take a chance.’ A lot of my thing is deprogramming the things that have been said to me or I’ve experienced before and to just

---

“I KNOW I GOT NOES BEFORE, BUT NOW THE NOES ARE NOT BEING ACCEPTED ANYMORE. THE MORE WE JUST DON’T ACCEPT THEM, AND WE KEEP ASKING QUESTIONS AND WE PUSH—I THINK THAT’S HOW WE’RE GOING TO REALLY CHANGE THE LOOK OF THE CREWS.”

---

throw them out the window. To keep challenging and finding ways to take those risks, because they’re not risks anymore. I think that something happened where we just can’t do it the same way

anymore. The audience doesn’t want that. They need that diversity, so it’s not even just a good thing to do; it’s essential.” Let these women storytellers be the essential workers we need now more than ever. ■



# PRODUCED BY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // JUNE | JULY 2020

UPPING THE  
CREATIVITY LEVEL ON  
*TROLLS WORLD TOUR*

P. 32

*THE GOOD PLACE*  
LEADS TO GOOD KARMA

P. 40

QUIBI LAUNCHES  
NEW PLATFORM IN  
A NEW REALITY

P. 52



## MORGAN NEVILLE

"DOCUMENTARIES ARE THE THING I CAN DO TO TRY AND PUT SOMETHING POSITIVE INTO THE WORLD, SOME SENSE OF UNDERSTANDING AND CURIOSITY. I FEEL LIKE WE ARE LIVING IN INCREASINGLY INCURIOROUS TIMES."



COURTESY OF DREAMWORKS ANIMATION LLC





# TROLLS and TROLLS

## INSIDE THE CREATIVE BUBBLE OF GINA SHAY'S WORLD

WRITTEN BY KATIE GRANT

**"I was never a princess girl,"** says Gina Shay, producer of the princess-rule-breaking movie *Trolls*, where there was a conscious decision to portray a princess with a positive body image, and the upcoming *Trolls World Tour*. "The troll dolls were prominent in my life in the '70s. I played with them in the shag carpet, and I had all these fantasies with them. I just never thought they would come back into my life in such a major way."

Considering the success of the DreamWorks Animation *Trolls* franchise, this is an understatement. Shay says her artistic mother, an impressionist painter and photographer who took her to countless museums during a Paris and New York upbringing, "basically set the foundation for why I do what I do." What Shay does is tell stories that make our hearts beat and toes tap, but also, as Shay likes to put it, "subvert the audience's expectations."

For the second *Trolls* installation, *Trolls World Tour*, the challenge of avoiding a business-as-usual follow-up movie is met by doing exactly that. Shay tells us, "Queen Poppy (the *Trolls* star and protagonist) goes on this journey to expand her naive viewpoint of the world—from super idealistic and altruistic to learning more complexities than she could ever imagine. In the end, she helps empower other people to save the world with her, instead of going it alone."

As a girl, Shay's world centered around the Muppets and *Sesame Street*. She considered Bert and Ernie her friends, who were always there no matter how many times she moved during her unconventional upbringing. "*Sesame Street* was like my moral compass and my guide to how to be a human being." Shay eventually met someone who worked on *Sesame Street* and realized she could make puppets herself. Always feeling "different and weirder" than her friends, she used creativity as an escape, and it's still paying off today.

Coming in on the ground floor of the *Trolls* experience, Shay loved the challenge of creating an origin story for the Scandinavian-born characters. She was on a quest to reimagine these “homogenous” creatures with high fuzzy hair, open arms and stocky bodies, noting, “We wanted to modernize them and bring them into the future, make them connective for everybody. Because we’re all quirky, whether we admit it or not, just like the trolls are. And they are unabashedly confident, even though they’re super quirky. So we wanted all shapes and sizes. The studio got a little bit concerned about redesigning these guys.”

At that point, Shay took her own advice, which she offers to aspiring animation producers: Push it. “Never stop pushing for the best creative. Because one thing I never want to do is look back and go, ‘That could have been better.’ Push and push and push. Somebody might say no, but at least you tried. Just feel free until someone says, ‘No, you can’t.’ Even when they say ‘No, you can’t,’ don’t take no for an answer.”

That pushing led to a world of wonderfully diverse *Trolls* characters, each quirky in their own right. “Kendal Cronkhite, our production designer, and art director Timothy Lamb came up with these crazy-looking characters, which ended up being Poppy and Branch. Our studio went through so many transitions over the course of the movie, but we just kept going forward with this big idea. The consumer products department wasn’t used to not having cinch-waisted princesses to sell. So it was a challenge for them, but they were able to connect. The movie, I think, connected with families, and that helped.”

What also helped the entire crew working on *Trolls* was Shay’s leadership style, which begins with the office environment. The *Trolls* corner of DreamWorks is a burst of happiness—bright, warm and fuzzy, just like the trolls themselves. There are white flowering light fixtures hanging from the ceiling, bright green and yellow walls, comfy pink couches, and plush dolls everywhere. It is a manifesta-

tion of what Cronkhite coined as “fuzzy immersion” to describe the world of this movie. That welcoming environment is just the beginning of how Shay invites her team to the table.

“Every movie has a different process based on what the leadership, the director and the producer feel is the best way to set the tone for the production itself. I’ve been working with Walt Dohrn, the director of *Trolls World Tour*, for more than 12 years. We feel that we make the best movie when everybody has a voice. The process of making the film reflects back in the movie. Even thematically.” Not only does every one of the *Trolls* crew have a voice, but they are asked for notes after exclusive crew pre-screenings. And those notes are read and taken, which is certainly not the norm.

Shay explains further, “What I like to do is be very transparent. I’ll say, ‘This is behind this decision. We had to make this decision because of X, Y, Z.’ And people

will say, ‘OK I get it.’

A lot of producers or directors like to hold their cards very close. But I feel like open communication with everybody is definitely more fun. It’s more productive. I still have to deal with studio politics and the franchise extension, but if I can keep the film crew here in a creative bubble, then we’re going to get the best out of them.”

That open channel exemplifies the same leadership skill Poppy learns in *Trolls World Tour*: listening. “We were still working on the first movie when we came up with the idea for the second one. We thought everybody who sees this movie, or is involved in this movie, loves the music aspect of it. We were thinking about how to subvert the audience’s expectations for a second movie. How do we expand this world, but in a musical way?”

Expand it musically they did. As



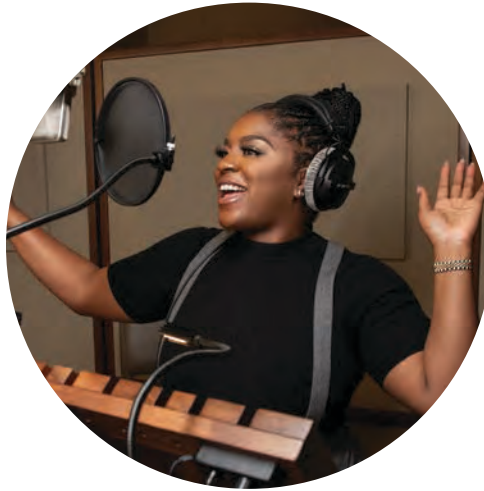
*Trolls*  
World Tour  
Director Walt  
Dohrn, Producer  
Gina Shay, Co-  
Director David P.  
Smith



Poppy transitions from princess to queen, she is called to task on how to listen. Delightfully, Poppy's musical education becomes the audience's as well, in a surprising way most would not expect from an animated movie. "We felt the depth was necessary in order to get people to really latch into a story. It needs to have some kind of depth that surprises you. For Poppy to go on a journey where she's a new leader, we looked at what leadership aspects we respect. What are the leadership skills of the best leaders we know? We decided listening is a very important part of leading."

Shay's own listening was honed growing up, as she puts it, "in that moment before technology." Yet technology is exactly what enabled the DreamWorks team to make the *Trolls* movies so different. The fuzzy immersion that Cronkhite desired for the animation was actually possible where it wouldn't have been just 10 years ago. However, the spirit of the movies that influenced Shay back in the day with "super rebellious offbeat characters that were going against the grain," like in *Where the Wild Things Are* or *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, was always at her fingertips. That spirit is infused into Poppy and her subjects, along with all the glitter, rainbows and roller skates it can handle.

Yet the music in *Trolls World Tour* "spans many, many different generations," going beyond the disco decade. The film not only covers some of the best tunes from the '70s, '80s and '90s to "root people in familiarities," but includes seven original songs. Those were used in places "we really needed to convey stories specifically for the film." Shay's process for helping create these songs was to "write up a blurb of what that moment needs to convey with Dohrn and Dave Mitchell (the director) including the tone, how we were going to actualize the sets, and who's



singing it.”

Justin Timberlake, who, Shay says, “is like our partner, an executive music producer,” was responsible for a lot of the original songs, but the overall soundtrack was a collaborative effort between many artists and is peppered with covers, just like the first *Trolls* movie. With musical ability such a huge part of how Shay goes about casting, she says she has to think about “who will be able to act and convey the humor as well as sing like crazy.” Those singers this time around, besides Timberlake, include Kelly Clarkson, Mary J. Blige and George Clinton, along with Anna Kendrick returning as Poppy.

Shay explains further: “Working on these movies is like an artists’ collective of 300-plus people.” The ability to corral so many creative voices starts with a great story. “If it’s open enough for everyone to give their own voice to it, to feel like they’re a part of building that story, then everybody puts into it and exceeds the creative expectations.”

Shay first learned about inspiring a creative crew from Ralph Bakshi on his production of *Cool World*. “He hired me as a PA because in high school I was friends with his son. I wanted to work in animation. He said, ‘In your off-hours you can try to draw these characters.’ Then I was on the same production as animator Tom McGrath and all these incredible, visionary people who were in their first jobs too. I learned from Ralph about the artists’ collective.

“He really inspired people to do their best work. I saw him empower the artists. So that was part of my education.” Now Shay sees everyone on her films as a filmmaker. She says it’s like workshoping a play together, and she strives to keep an “open creative space” like she saw on *Cool World*. Thanks to her many years of experience as a producer and artist, she feels confident being open and vulnerable. “What I know from being an artist myself is I am most happy having the freedom to express myself or to somewhat creatively influence a project I’m working on. That makes me the happiest. So I think I

learned that just based on who I am.”

Shay’s other major professional influences came from Matt Stone and Trey Parker of *South Park* and the late Stephen Hillenburg, creator of the *SpongeBob SquarePants* franchise. She worked on *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut* as the line producer. “I learned so much from Stone and Trey when I thought about comedy. That was an unbelievable experience. It was really hard to make that movie. But they taught me to say, ‘OK, here’s the obvious part of the joke, and then here’s where you subvert the expectations of the joke.’”

Speaking of Hillenburg, she says, “I learned a lot about respect. He hired me even when I was seven months pregnant, on a movie that was just a two-year schedule. I needed three months off for maternity, and he still wanted to hire me.

“He was empowering. I witnessed the level of charm he put in his characters and how much he loved and was passionate about protecting the integrity of the characters. That’s where I learned how to protect a franchise and make sure everybody working on it keeps the core values intact. He was awesome, and he’ll be missed on this planet.”

Looking at Shay’s IMDb page, one might think she very strategically chose a direct path from PA to background coordinator to associate producer to line producer to co-producer to her current executive producer position. But she says her career has always been based on which projects she was drawn to creatively. “That’s

where I base most of my decisions on taking jobs. Who am I going to be working with and what are we doing? Am I going to be challenged? Luckily, I was able to get to where my day is just filled with creative tasks.”

For the most part, those tasks revolve around story. “Story is the most important

“NEVER STOP PUSHING FOR THE BEST CREATIVE. BECAUSE ONE THING I NEVER WANT TO DO IS LOOK BACK AND GO, ‘THAT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER.’ PUSH AND PUSH AND PUSH.”

part about producing. It is a lot of fun in the beginning of these movies. But also, once the production department starts up and you’re in dailies, then you’re watching the movie come to life, and that is a gift. I look at my schedule for the next day every night and if I see that I have animation dailies and art, I’m excited for the day.” Maybe as excited as we are to see how Shay’s story unfolds and how she’s going to meet, exceed or subvert our expectations next. ■



# Parenting an Only Child Through a Pandemic



Katie Grant [Follow](#)

May 19 · 13 min read ★

How Bad Is It When Your Toddler's Only Playmate Is You? What the Experts Say

By Katie Grant



Just two weeks into social distancing for COVID-19, my 3-year-old daughter's favorite lovey became her new best friend — complete with his own deep voice and her ability to blame things on him. It made me sad. Not because she'd created an imaginary friend (which is completely normal around this age and a sign of creativity), but because she is an only child. And she can't be around any other children for who-knows-how-long.

She's been in preschool since she was 18 months old, and she was enjoying playdates with her three best friends. She was learning how to share and take turns and process conflict and emotions.

And then, the day before her 3rd birthday party (that we had to cancel), it all stopped. We started staying safer at home.

I worried that she might never know a world without masks, seeing other people only from six feet apart. I wished for a backyard in case she'd never swing on playground swings again. I was mourning the loss of the normal childhood she might never have. I feared she might never get back to being sufficiently socialized and become a spoiled child who only ever wanted to be around adults.

And, yes, these seem like first world problems compared to those who are homeless or hungry, sick or treating the sick. I'm extremely grateful for all that we have. And that's exactly why our



family is so adamant about staying at home — to keep everyone else safe. But that safety comes at the cost of keeping my only child from the peer interactions she desperately needs at this young age. So I called upon some experts to find out if I had reason to worry and what I could do about it.

### **The experts:**

**Dr. Susan Newman — author of *The Case for the Only Child*, *Parenting an Only Child*, and *Under One Roof Again* and mother of an only child**

**Janine Halloran — Licensed Mental Health Counselor, mother of two and expert on play and coping skills for kids with her site [EncouragePlay.com](http://EncouragePlay.com)**

**Michele Garber — Licensed Special Education Teacher with multiple degrees in Psychology, Arts in Education (Drama), and mother of an only child**

### **Here's what I learned:**

#### **1. Little Ones Don't Really Know the Difference**

Dr. Newman, a social psychologist, parenting expert and best-selling author, assured me that “younger children, particularly only children, spend most of their time with their parents anyway. Therefore, this time, to parents it seems extraordinary. Different,

difficult. But to very young children, I'm not sure it makes all that much difference."

She says toddlers are not so attuned to social schedules as teenagers are and, because of their immense curiosity about so many things, they can move on to this new normal more easily. "They are absorbing and learning so much that a change in their routine isn't that difficult for them to handle."

Phew! This social isolation really isn't that bad for only toddlers. But my daughter is also very verbal and aware of why life is different right now. She says it's because of "the sick people" and she really misses her friends. In that case, Dr. Newman says...

## **2. Let Them Know It's Not Forever AND Give Them Something to Look Forward to**

"Make it clear to her this isn't forever. 'We, mom and dad, we don't know exactly when the germs are going to go away but, as soon as they do, you're going to go see your teachers and your friends at school.'"

Dr. Newman highlighted giving little ones something to look forward to. "For example, tell them something like, 'So, after dinner, we're going to go for a walk' or 'Tomorrow we're going to work in the garden.' This gives kids something to plan on in their minds and it's just encouraging. It's a positive in the middle of all these negatives that we're dealing with."



I had already been doing that naturally, trying to normalize my child's life right now. But what can we give them to look forward to?

### **3. Virtual Visits ARE Enough**

As someone who frowns on lots of screen time unless you're home sick, it's really raining outside or, you know, a worldwide pandemic, this one worried me. It turns out all the experts I spoke to say having virtual playdates on Facetime or Zoom are not only sufficient but essential right now. Janine Halloran, Licensed Mental Health Counselor and play expert, offers, "Digital play is actually a type of play. And, truthfully, we all do it. That shouldn't be the only type of play we're doing. But I also don't want parents to feel guilty if their kids are doing a lot of screen time because that's the reality of what's going on right now."

I was assured by Halloran and Dr. Newman that just seeing their friends' and families' faces on a screen is a reminder to little ones of the wider world and that they have a support system out there that loves them. On top of that, virtual classes like yoga or dance or circle time with their school are great as well. "That's really what it has to be," Halloran adds. And she also wants parents to give themselves grace right now about all of this. Especially single parents or families where both parents are still working, who don't have much, if any, time to sit down with their kids and play or make art.

Great, then, are we off the hook for screens in general?  
Apparently, also yes.



Photo courtesy of the author

#### 4. Screen Time is FINE

Halloran even pointed out, “The kids who are growing up in this screen generation need to be able to communicate in two different ways. Essentially, they’re learning two different languages. You learn how to communicate online and then, you learn how to communicate in person; it’s two different skill sets.” My daughter is actually sending video messages (with my help) through the Marco Polo app that lets you talk when you have time. So she’s staying connected with her friends and learning online skills that will only help her later in life. Another sigh of relief.

As for TV shows, quality children’s programming like you find on PBS is great for keeping an only child’s social skills up and processing emotions. Our favorites were also endorsed by Halloran and include *Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood*, *Wishenpoof!* and *Ni Hao, Kai-Lan*. So when you need a break or time to make dinner, you can feel good about turning on the tube. You’ll both benefit from that screen time.

Screen time without guilt? Check! So... how to substitute peer-to-peer socializing?

#### 5. Let Teachable Moments Take Over

Without the option of squabbling over toys at school or at a playdate, both Halloran and Dr. Newman offered ways to



continue lessons about sharing or taking turns. Dr. Newman suggests a dinner table instance, “When you have one scoop of mashed potatoes left, you can say, ‘Oh, I know you really want this, but daddy wants it too. Why don’t we cut it in half?’ And you could do that with any number of things.”

Halloran echoes, “You can use those teachable moments. You can have her share with her dolls or her stuffies. Or you can prompt it with, ‘We have this one cookie, but there are three friends. What do we do?’” Halloran also stresses that socializing with **any** age is still socializing — whether it’s in person or not. We’ve got no choice right now, but I was glad for the reassurance.

Beware, however, of letting that equal playing field get out of hand. Dr. Newman notes, “Always giving in is really doing your child a disservice. Should they start to think everything’s coming their way, they are going to have a rude awakening when they get out. They’re not going to have the ball thrown to them all the time and they’re not going to get every single thing they think they’re entitled to. Even in this quarantine period with an only child, it’s an opportunity. Your child may want you to play a game when you’re working. But you have to tell her she can’t come into your office when you’re working. She needs to learn she doesn’t run the show, and that there are three people in the family. One of them is a child.”

Michele Garber, Licensed Special Education Teacher, says play with loveys or imaginary friends is also a chance for socializing.

“Imaginary play gives little ones a forum, a place to role play and imitate things that are on their minds. There’s an opportunity for treating that lovey like a friend. The lovey might tell the parent, ‘I’m sad.’ And the parent can engage in that conversation. ‘Why are you sad, lovey? What happened between the two of you?’ And let them tell you. Listen and then you can reply, ‘Wow, I understand. I wonder what you could do next time.’”

Garber says these interactions serve an important function.

“They’re talking through these scenarios because they are socializing. They’re playing out things they ran into that are incomplete and they want a way to complete it. That is really gently doing what they need to do. Also, it’s a practice of language and communication and interaction. There’s no worry about a little one doing this.”

Perhaps we **can** fill their friends’ shoes to some extent right now. How else can we help little ones stuck in a house with adults to adjust and continue learning social skills?

## **6. Create Scenarios**

Garber says modeling and imitation is how we can best help little ones adjust. “There’s a certain modeling of social interaction that’s available at school. And you can steer those interactions toward practicing taking turns or sharing, for example. You can model sharing for them and ask them how they do it at school. You feed it back into their memory of school. So you’re still there

at school without them being there; they're still getting that connection. And you could say, 'Show me what you do when you share at school? What happens?' Have them show it with a teddy and let them model that themselves. That will reinforce these lessons also."

Another way of looking at modeling and imitation is to create social stories, as Halloran cites. "Carol Gray was the founder and creator of this idea. Basically, it's a little book or story that you make for kids and it talks them through different scenarios. Like, 'The reason why we're going back to school is because people are better now and we have a vaccine or we have this, we have that. When we do go back to school, we will still need to wash our hands. We will need to make sure that we're paying attention to covering our cough. And, if we are sick, we'll stay home but we'll still go back to school.'"

This also works for what you notice during your child's imaginary play, Garber adds. "If you notice your child talking and she's trying to work something out with her toys, I wouldn't chime in right then, while she's focusing on what she's creating. But make a mental note and tell a story later to help her process those feelings. If you noticed a conflict, you can ask, 'Could we do it another way? Let's try this. Let's try something new.'"

It's nice to know that creating circumstances can help little only ones to continue growing. But we can't be right by their side all the time. Nor should we



## 7. Alone Time Is Beneficial — for EVERYONE

Letting your little only one play alone is very helpful for them — and it can give you a break. Dr. Newman tells us, “If your little one is doing more imaginative play with their toys or imaginary friends, they are using their alone time very well. That is them coping, which is going to help them a lot as they get older because alone time is really beneficial for kids.”

So don't feel like you have to fill all of their time when you're at home together. Garber adds, “Don't steer your kids too much. It's like you pop in and you pop out while they're playing on their own. You don't need to give them very structured activities. Offer them random stuff: string, cardboard boxes and crayons. And they can just create. The better activities are where it's open and they are about movement. These little ones are about movement, movement, imitation, imitation.”

When I asked Dr. Newman if she could foresee any developmental or psychological issues that might arise after the long period of isolation for younger only children she said, “Actually I do. And it relates to parents. The answer is no **unless** parents are so anxious right now and have difficulty relating to their child. If they can't play and they can't be involved and they're not having fun because they are so consumed by anxiety and worry and even stress, children can pick up on those feelings. Then there could be problems. You could be adding nervousness to your kids that they might not otherwise have. Developmentally, I don't see any long-

term problems except for that caveat.”

Halloran offers a solution to combating that new level of stress and anxiety, “I want to make sure that you are taking care of yourself. If you have the advantage of having two parents at home, then one of you could hang out with your child, especially if he/she is still pretty little. The other one could go out or upstairs or do something else in a different place, so that you are both still feeling like you have energy and are able to actually do your jobs and parent because this is crazy cakes big time.” If you are a single parent, take whatever moments you can while your child is napping to breathe. And seek professional help if you feel you need it.

Garber agrees, “I have to stress that adult self-care is really important. And I see some people are working their butts off. So I’m not trying to say you’re going to have a ton of time. You know, some people are in the midst of being in hospitals and being first responders. But, in any way, small ways, if people can stop and breathe while they’re in the car going somewhere and/or reset themselves by singing a song, listening to music, whatever. It’s really important right now that we pay attention.”

Point taken. Grab those moments alone when and wherever you can — even if you have to hide in the closet. And, when you are together, try to have some fun!

## **8. Play with Them!**

According to Halloran, there are sixteen different kinds of play, and any type of play right now is good for you and your child. She suggests doing whatever floats your boat, and your kids will pick up on your enthusiasm. “Do things that you loved as a kid. If you loved monopoly as a child, do it. If you loved building with cardboard, do it. Introduce your own ways of playing and know that play is a natural stress reliever. It’s good for kids to do it, and it’s good for adults to do it. And make sure that people are having that downtime because this is very stressful. It’s very stressful on a good day.”

I was also wondering if it’s possible to spend too much time with our only children during this period. Can they be paid too much attention? “It’s really hard to spoil a child with love, affection and time,” notes Dr. Newman. “What ruins them is possessions and too much stuff. What you’re trying to do in this period is create a sense of security for your child. With very young children that’s created by spending time with them, doing fun things with them, laughing and not being a strict disciplinarian.”

So have fun and play during your time together. But doesn’t that combat any chance our little only children might have for independence? Actually, there are ways around that.

Dr. Newman says, “Give your child assignments, so to speak. Say, ‘Can you carry your laundry to your room? And put it away?’ Even if she puts it in the wrong place, it doesn’t matter. Ask them little favors like, ‘Go get daddy’s book he was reading, it’s next to the



bed.’ Or say, ‘I have to go to work now. Can you play by yourself for the next 20 minutes?’ I think very young children’s attention span is not so great, so you have to work with and around that. But give them some specific time that is her independent time and let her choose what she wants to do with that time.”



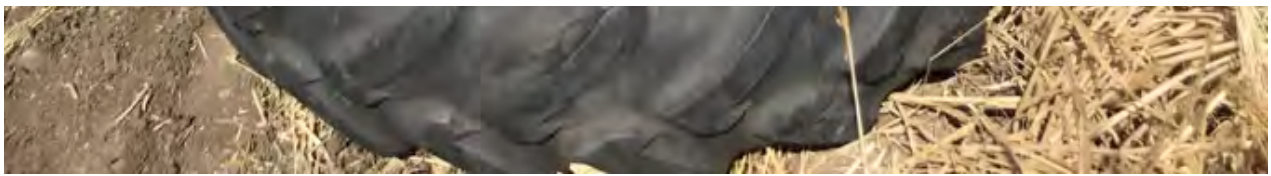


Photo courtesy of the author

## 9. And Connect

Some might say this time is one of forced connection but let it be that anyway. Connect, reconnect and let yourselves enjoy this time together as much as you can. Your little only child is most likely thinking how great it is that they get to be around their parents all the time. Forced or not, bonding will occur and get reinforced. They will be fine as long as you stick to your routine, work in some teachable moments and play. You are helping them create a sense of security now that they can take with them back into the world when it opens.

And when you do return to the world, help them ease back into society. Be aware that some children might have social anxiety about returning. You can also trust their teachers will whip them back into shape if they do pick up any bad habits while holed up with you. “Remember, this is the ultimate shared experience,” Halloran points out. “Your child and their friends will have all gone through this and will be able to commiserate with each other when they reunite.”

Finally, Dr. Newman offers this, “Children, especially these very young children, are resilient. And they’re going to follow your

lead.” Let’s lead them the best we can. Given the circumstances.

What’s your experience parenting an only child right now? Let me know in the comments below.

[Parenting Toddlers](#)

[Safer At Home](#)

[Parenting](#)

[Only Child](#)

[Covid Diaries](#)

## Discover Medium

Welcome to a place where words matter. On Medium, smart voices and original ideas take center stage - with no ads in sight. Watch

## Make Medium yours

Follow all the topics you care about, and we’ll deliver the best stories for you to your homepage and inbox. Explore

## Become a member

Get unlimited access to the best stories on Medium — and support writers while you’re at it. Just \$5/month. Upgrade

[About](#)

[Help](#)

[Legal](#)



# PRODUCED BY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // FEBRUARY | MARCH 2020

**THE MORNING  
SHOW DELIVERS A  
WAKE-UP CALL**

P. 52

**OUR TIKTOK  
ADDICTION**

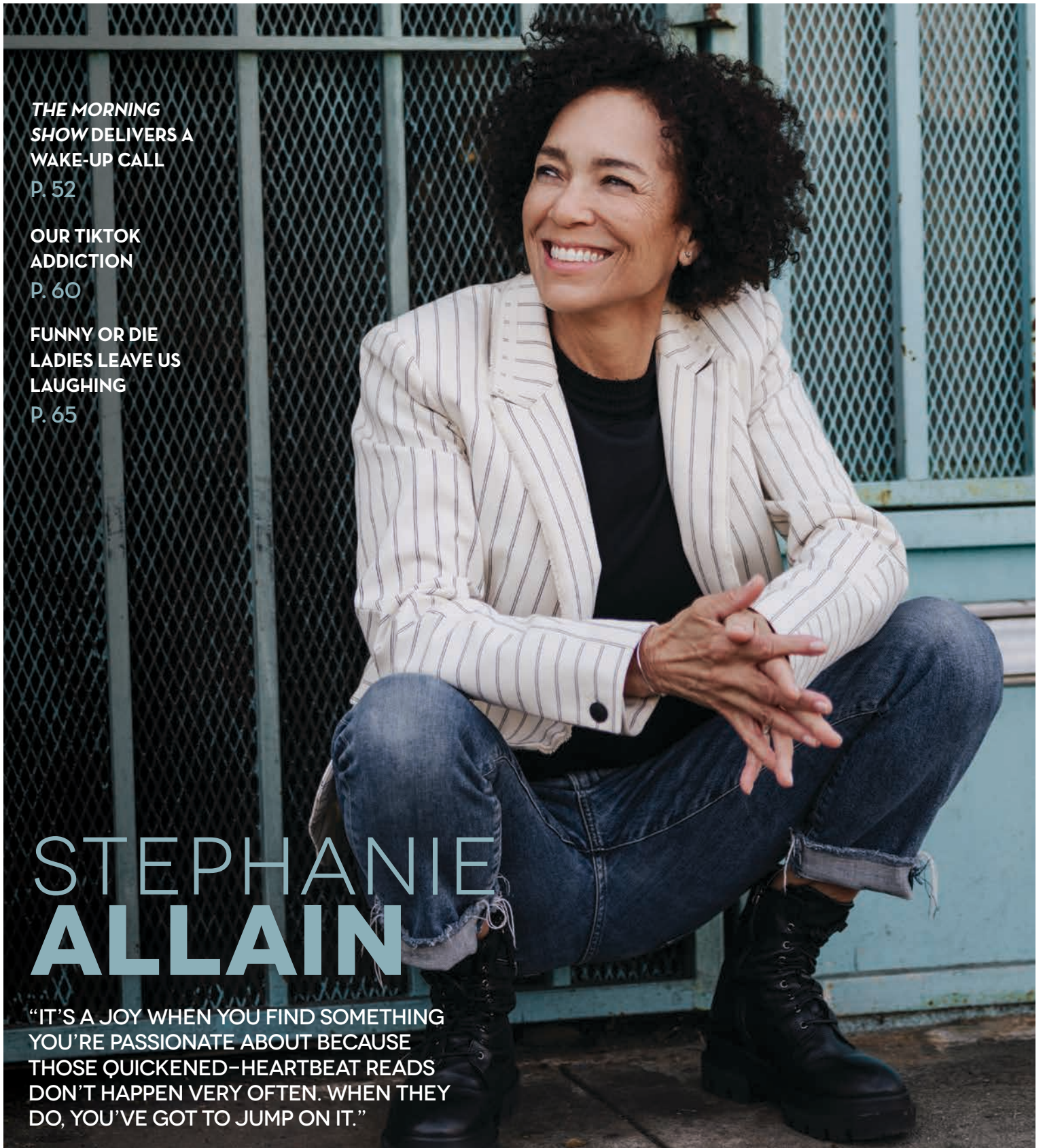
P. 60

**FUNNY OR DIE  
LADIES LEAVE US  
LAUGHING**

P. 65

## STEPHANIE ALLAIN

"IT'S A JOY WHEN YOU FIND SOMETHING YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT BECAUSE THOSE QUICKENED-HEARTBEAT READS DON'T HAPPEN VERY OFTEN. WHEN THEY DO, YOU'VE GOT TO JUMP ON IT."





# bearing FRUIT

CHERRYPICKS GIVES FEMALE  
CRITICS A STRONGER VOICE

WRITTEN BY KATIE GRANT

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY THE CHERRYPICKS.COM



Life is sweet for  
CherryPicks founders  
Rebecca Odes (left) and  
Miranda Bailey

**"I feel like the ideas just find me and force me to make them come alive,"** says Producer, Director, and CEO of CherryPicks, Miranda Bailey, when offering her take on creativity. "I think everyone has amazing thoughts and amazing ideas all the time, and it's really just about executing them.

"There are two factors that stop people. One is money, right? No, there's three. Two is time. And then, three, the most important, is fear. At this point in my life, I'm not afraid of failing because I have failed so many times that it's become incredibly beneficial for me. With every failure you say, 'Well, I'm not doing *that* again, but I am going to do *this*.'"

Bailey's latest idea to materialize is CherryPicks (TheCherryPicks.com), an aggregator of female-only film critics who show what

women and female identifiers of all races think about movies. She founded it with her CCO, author Rebecca Odes, of wifey.tv and Gurl.com. Hailed by the likes of Reese Witherspoon and Brie Larson on Twitter, CherryPicks has been called a female version of Rotten Tomatoes but, Bailey says, "I don't think CherryPicks is in competition with Rotten Tomatoes at all. We're very different. It's like comparing *Men's Journal* to *Vogue*."

"We use a lot of Rotten Tomato-certified critics. We use a lot of their reviews. If they're certified CherryPickers, they have a page on our website. If they're not, then we just link to their reviews on a movie page. So they're aggregated, collated and collected on our site. I think there's room enough for everyone."

From the time she was an 8-year-old girl who decided to make movies after visiting a Hollywood sound stage to the present day—as someone who's won awards for producing, directing and acting—Bailey can't stop creating. She attributes that, with great certainty, to her daddy issues. "I think I'm still trying to impress my father. I'm still trying to be like, 'Dad, look at me. I'm here. I'm here. Look what I've done.' I just have to, at some point, accept that that won't happen."

*Being Frank*, Bailey's first foray into feature film directing, follows Frank's son as he discovers his father has a second family. Bailey says it's about her own father and what it was like to be her mom, married to a man with a whole other life. It seems uncovering the truth has always been Bailey's thing. It started with penning and directing her first play in high school about her parents' divorce and taking it to the stage in her hometown of Vail, Colorado. After college, she went on to form her own production company, Cold Iron Pictures, in LA and built an impressive body of work including *Diary of a Teenage Girl*, *Against the Current*, *Swiss Army Man*, *Greenlit*, *Norman*, *The Pathological Optimist* and *Super*.

Seeing a theme of uncovering the truth in her work, though, eluded Bailey until her producing partner at Cold Iron, Aman-

da Marshall, pointed it out during the filming of *Being Frank*. "I literally was telling my producer, 'I'm making a movie, but I'm not like Noah Baumbach (*The Squid and the Whale*, *Marriage Story*) or the Daniels—Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert (*Swiss Army Man*)—or Marielle Heller (*A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*). I don't have a vision. I don't have my own voice.'

"She said, 'Are you [bleeping] kidding? You definitely have a voice.' When I replied that I never felt like I had themes to my movies, she told me, 'Your theme is basically making movies where people are hiding secrets or giving out misinformation.'

"I was stunned. Then I realized *Being Frank* is just like *The Pathological Optimist*. Both protagonists are not bad and they're not good. They're somewhere in between, and there's a lot we can't figure out about them. It was a revelation, learning that about myself."

Even her upcoming directing turn, *The Assistants*, which she calls "*Devil Wears Prada* meets *Nine to Five* for millennials," addresses issues of truth and lies, as characters "have to make moral choices that sometimes aren't the right thing to do."

So as an artist who focuses on finding the truth, it only makes sense that when she saw the reviews for her production of Lake Bell's *I Do... Until I Don't* and realized

the only reviewers panning it were male, she decided to start an all-female site for female-identifying movie critics to express their truth. Enter CherryPicks.

"I was thinking, 'This isn't right. This isn't fair. Why is Lake Bell getting all these guys saying this?' And then I thought, 'I want to see what the women think.' I looked around and said, 'Where can I find the *women's* scores?'"

"I learned there are websites that hire writers who are women, which I didn't know at first because they didn't come up in Google searches. But the difference is, I didn't want a place that was going to *hire* writers to write reviews. I wanted a place that would collate and collect existing reviews and hyperlink to their pages, whether it's Black Girl Nerds or The Hollywood Reporter, to give them clicks to support those writers so that they would be more visible, because I couldn't find them when I was looking."

Rather than offering a binary score of good or bad, CherryPicks gives you four different score options. First is a Bowl of Cherries for a movie you should run to see in the theater. Then there are Two Cherries for "see it soon." One Cherry recommends you watch it on the couch at home when you're sick and, finally, there is The Pits, which means see it if you don't mind sitting through a "pitty" movie.

Uncovering new or unheard voices has long been important to Bailey. She gave Jill Soloway (*Transparent*) her first writing job, produced Baumbach's *The Squid and the Whale* after he had a flop, and she provided Kwan and Scheinert their big break to make *Swiss Army Man* after years of making music videos.

"I think for a lot of producers and financiers, it's very risky to take on people that have never done anything. Or like Noah had just had a flop and James Gunn (*Super*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*) had a flop as well. They were still really good movies. And I was, at that time, one of the people who would be like, 'Well, I don't care.'

"Whereas, when you have a large studio or a team of people, everyone's afraid to make a mistake. Everyone's afraid to

## Lightning Round With Miranda

Favorite Holiday Movie:

*Bad Santa*

Favorite '80s Movie:

*Working Girl*

Favorite Animated Kids' Movie:

*Storks*

Movie to watch again and again  
while stranded on an island:

*Step Brothers*

**CherryPicks**



PHOTOGRAPH BY COLD IRON PICTURES



bring in a movie that's not going to work because their job's at stake. Well, my job's been at stake all my life, and I'm slowly trying to kill myself, so it works fine," Bailey adds dryly.

That trust in uncovering new voices, even her own, has paid off for Bailey. Her first documentary, *Greenlit*, about how to green a movie production for less environmental impact, was just supposed to be an extra for another film's DVD. "The situation turned into a disaster, and I thought, 'This is a great movie. Instead of excerpts for a DVD, this is its own movie.' And then, as a

joke, I submitted it to SXSW, and it got in. So I think, 'Oh, I'm a filmmaker now.'"

As for CherryPicks, Bailey has big plans in the works. There will be a podcast and an app in 2020. "Our first podcast series is called *The Snub Club*, and we have two hosts, which I can't announce yet. One is an African American woman who's a critic, and one is a cute, bouncy, blond movie entertainment personality, so they come from very different backgrounds. They're going to talk about snubs throughout history and snubs right now. Also, people who feel like they've been

snubbed or people's favorite snubs like, 'Oh my god, this was the best movie and people snubbed it.'"

For now, Bailey is very happy with the turns her path has taken. "I fell in love with producing because I love working, and I love being busy. I love being hyper organized. I love solving problems. So I've been able to become the kind of producer that I enjoy. I'm more of a creative producer now." And that leaves her extra time to focus on meeting the current demand for more female voices out there in media. Seems the timing is ripe for CherryPicks. ■



# PRODUCED BY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // DECEMBER | JANUARY 2020



THE PRODUCER  
WHO KEEPS  
SCORSESE TICKING  
P. 96

BILL HADER GOES  
FROM FILM NERD  
TO FILMMAKER  
P. 74

## MARTA KAUFFMAN

"ONE OF THE THINGS GRACE  
AND FRANKIE HAS IS A QUALITY  
OF WARMTH. SOMEONE ONCE  
CALLED IT COMFORT FOOD, AND I  
THINK THAT'S WHAT IT IS."

# ONCE UPON A Film Fan

## BILL HADER SETS HIS SIGHTS ON STORY

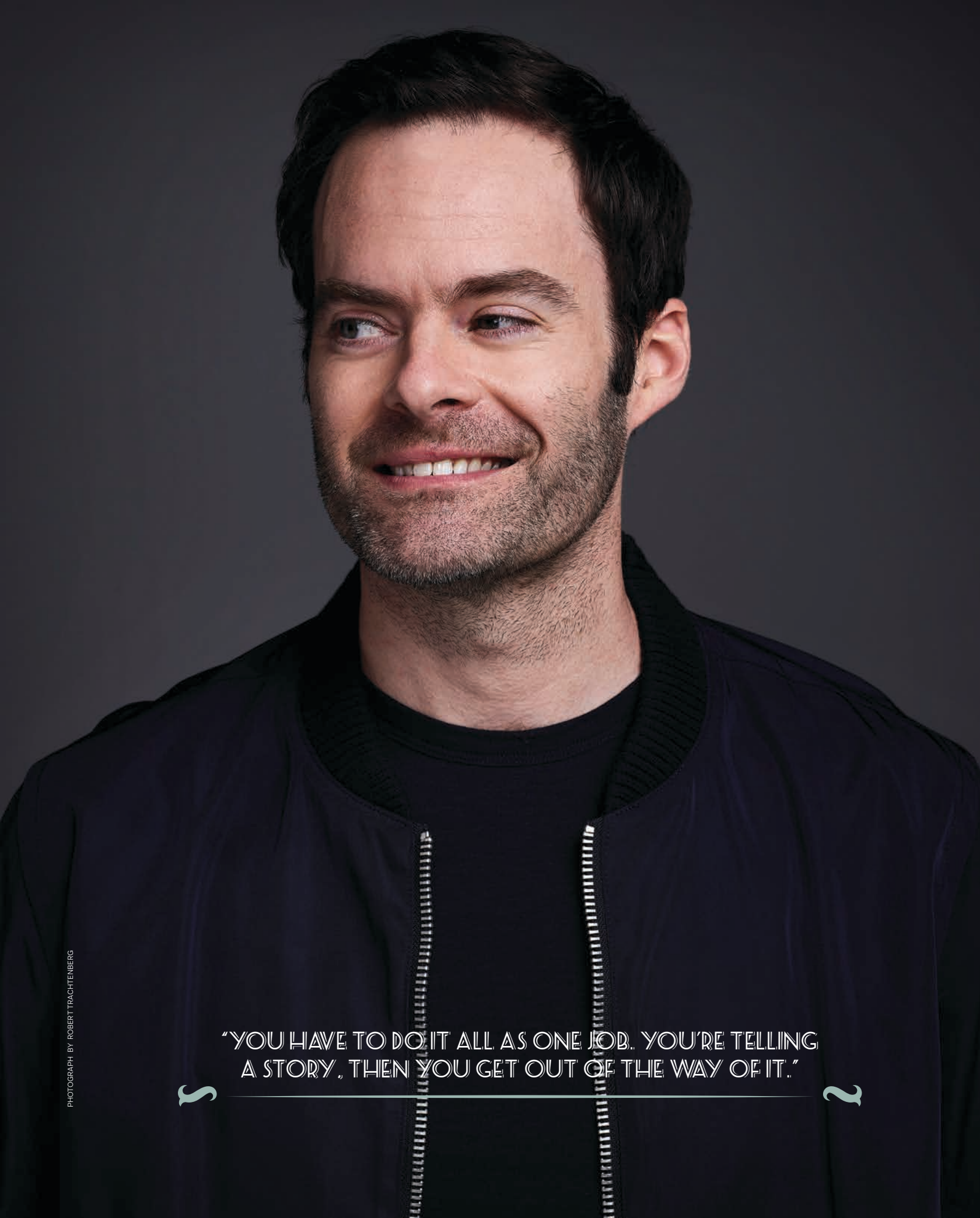
WRITTEN BY KATIE GRANT

**T**he *Jaws* T-shirt was a clear giveaway when Bill Hader showed up to work as a PA in the early 2000s on sets like *The Scorpion King*, *Collateral Damage* and *Critical Mass*. A giveaway that he is, was, and always will be a film nerd. Since those days, the former SNL cast member has earned more distinguished titles, such as multiple Emmy winner (for acting and producing), DGA winner, WGA winner, showrunner and producer. Most importantly, Bill Hader can now finally call himself a filmmaker. Well, as he puts it, he can do that—but only when he’s “alone in the shower.”

Hader headed to LA from Tulsa with the singular goal of making movies. “I just want to see how these things are made,” he remembers thinking. That spirit of curiosity and humility, still very present, made way for Hader’s climbing success. After all, he never meant to be in front of the camera. He ended up on SNL purely by chance when Megan Mullally saw him in a backyard performance with his four-man improv troupe—which he landed in because he simply wanted something to do, something creative. Mullally called Lorne Michaels, Hader auditioned, and the rest is history.

Hader started making his own films as a teen chasing his willing sisters through the woods with a camera for action scenes. Without an editing system, he would try to cut his work between VCRs but mostly edited in camera on the VHS format. The positive feedback he got from a high school teacher who said, “You’re really good,” combined with the creative high he felt, kept Hader going and fed his drive to make movies.

True to form, Hader can’t help but use a film reference to explain how he sees producing: “Well, it’s kind of like Lee Marvin’s character [Major Reisman] in *The Dirty Dozen*. He pretty much puts everyone together. He’s the person that says, ‘We need an explosives guy. We need this. We need that. We need



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT TRACHTENBERG

"YOU HAVE TO DO IT ALL AS ONE JOB. YOU'RE TELLING  
A STORY, THEN YOU GET OUT OF THE WAY OF IT."







Bill Hader  
on the set  
of *Barry*

PHOTO COURTESY OF ISABELLA VOSMIKOVA/HBO

this so we can pull *that* thing off.' And sometimes the filmmaker, the producer, will oversee that aspect."

Currently as co-creator, co-executive producer, writer, director and star of *Barry* (HBO), Hader tries to think like a producer, but admits that after all his years in the business, it's "instinctual. That's the hardest thing about all this. You have to have the experience in order to get the experience. You have to kind of win the lottery."

And win the lottery he did. Landing SNL gave Hader the ability to reach out and meet, or better yet, work with, artists he looks up to. As a big Pixar fan, Hader asked to collaborate with their visionaries, and Pete Docter in particular. That turned into a writing credit on *Inside Out*, the Oscar-winning animated feature in which he played

the voice of Fear. He was actually asked to play Fear after recording a temporary voice track for the animators to work with that featured all the characters. Speaking in that voice of Fear, Hader has become an unofficial and very vocal spokesperson for anxiety, citing the terror he experienced working on live TV for SNL.

Hader also worked with the writers of *South Park*, aiming to hone his story structure. That stint became his first producing credit and his first Emmy win. If working as a PA taught Hader how to run a crew properly, SNL showed him how to produce his own work, suggesting costumes, makeup and basic set pieces for the sketches he wrote. And then *South Park* let him see that producing stories is really about finding the emotional heart

of the piece rather than a three-act story structure or the hero's journey.

"I used to think it was that stuff. And it's not. What I learned at *South Park* is you follow the emotion and have a logic. And I think that's why Alec [Berg] and I write really well together. I'm like almost all emotion and he's almost all logic."

Berg is *Barry*'s co-creator and co-EP whom their mutual agent paired Hader with in hopes they'd nail an idea for Hader's HBO deal. They happened upon the premise of a hit man, which Berg famously did not like at first. But once Hader explained that it would be him, not the slick, skinny-tie-wearing idea of a hit man we usually see, they were off and running—straight to an acting class for research. And therein lies the brilliance of *Barry*, because





Hader, Stephen Root and  
Barry co-creator Alec Berg

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ISABELLA YOSHIKAWA/HBO

placing a hit man with PTSD from his military years in an acting class so he can get in touch with his emotions is unexpected, interesting, dramatic *and* funny.

That acting class was taught by Howie Deutch—famous for directing films like *Pretty in Pink* and *Grumpier Old Men*—at the Beverly Hills Playhouse. Hader had plenty of experience in improv classes but not acting classes, which are a whole different animal. Between Deutch's consulting on the first season and a cast full of actors playing actors with decades of class time between them—not to mention Henry Winkler, who studied with the famed acting teacher Stella Adler—the show is so true to form that it adds to *Barry's* already disturbing nature. And that combo of Hader and Berg playing off the right and left sides of their respective brains is, literally, a winning one. Sixteen awards later, the team is currently working on season 3 of *Barry*.

Hader learned on the job how to make hard production calls like the one he

cites from *Barry* season 2's final day of shooting. They were slated to film a big shoot-out scene on location as well as a three-page monologue for Stephen Root's character, Fuches, Barry's crime boss. But it was raining, so sound was an issue. The suggested plan was to do the shoot-out, wait on the rain and do the monologue, hoping to make it in between storms. Hader said, "I don't want to do that to Stephen because he'll be in his head going, 'I have to nail this. I have to get it right.'"

Hader made the costly decision to bring the entire crew back for a half day at the end of the week when it wasn't supposed to rain. He says he was met with an "awful, dead silence. That was a big one where I felt like I dropped a bomb and then walked away. It was really for the actor ... I didn't want him trying to give a long monologue, and then instead of listening to him, we're looking at the sky."

Hader credits keeping it simple and taking things one day at a time for getting

through days like that. "It's kind of the mountain climber thing where they have to look right in front of them. If they look at the top, they'll just freak out. So you have to look in front of you and not see how much longer you have to shoot."

Besides *Barry* season 3, next up for Hader is a feature film called *Henchmen* that he wrote with four other people. It's about "two guys who learn they are henchmen for a bad guy." He also continues to contribute as a writer, producer and performer to the Emmy-nominated *Documentary Now!*, a farcical mockumentary series he created with Fred Armisen, Seth Myers and Rhys Thomas for IFC. "*Documentary Now!* is like an ultimate collaboration between people who have their own shows. Rhys Thomas and Alex Buono, those two guys make that show happen. We make the jokes and stuff and talk about the recipe basically. But they have to go and make it. So I give them most of the credit for that show."

Hader is also a dad helping raise three girls and, when asked to compare parenting and producing, he offers, "I think people just like feeling heard. You try to do things with as much respect as you can and hear people as much as you can, even if you think you know the answer to something. The flip side is if you're too nice, people feel like they can take advantage of you. So you have to just be nice but really honest and no bullshit. And that might involve saying, 'This isn't working.'"

Hader's advice for up-and-coming fellow film nerds is simply to fail. "The big thing for me was failing and learning from failure. When I was coming up, it was so expensive to make something and make it on a professional level, but now you can do it with your phone. So you don't really have an excuse.

"I think the thing that holds people back is fear of failing. They get nervous and I just would make it, see what happens and learn. If it comes from your life, then it's easier to write because you know how you felt. Everyone starts off copying the stuff that they like. You do that for a while and then slowly, you start to know what you like, and you start just being

honest in your storytelling."

Honest stories, Hader says, must include both the dark and lighter sides of life. "Life is like that if you're open to it. You have bright moments and terrible moments and that's just how it works. So when you don't have that, it feels weird. I always feel like when something's too light, I kind of roll my eyes at it. Or if something is too serious, I roll my eyes at it."

Casting *Barry* was another exercise in authenticity for Hader. He says Anthony Carrigan won the part of NoHo Hank because of the way Carrigan *listened* in the audition. "Sometimes people like to cut out the listening and I like to watch it. I like seeing the thought enter someone's head. I love just sitting and watching someone behave."

One of *Barry*'s casting directors, Sherry Thomas, was hired partially because she, like Hader, happened to have Winkler on her short list to play acting teacher Gene Cousineau. She came in to the interview with that list, admitting presumption, but that bold move was a sign to Hader they were on the same page.

It was a show that, by the way, Hader couldn't believe anyone was actually watching until *Barry* got 13 Emmy

nominations for the first season. Those accolades won't keep him from working hard, though. Even when he's called a "TV auteur" by the press, Hader offers, "It's nice, but you can't look at yourself that way. It doesn't make you better at your job. You've got to just keep trying to get better."

What he's improving on now is point of view. As an 8-year-old boy, watching classic films with his dad, Hader realized he "was always moved by scenes that had a very strong point of view, like the scene in *Taxi Driver* when DeNiro's on the phone with Cybil Shepherd after their disastrous date, and while he's talking to her, the camera just kind of dollies off of him. It's almost like the movie can't watch what's happening."

On *Barry*, holding to that point of view gets harder with all the hats Hader wears. "You have to do it all as one job. You're telling a story, then you get out of the way of it and then everything else, the acting and directing, it's all just enhancing that point of view, that story. Every aspect of filmmaking is to harness that and to try to foster it or get out of the way of it." Judging by his work, Bill Hader is one film nerd-turned-filmmaker who's mastering that process. ■



Henry Winkler  
with Hader in  
season 2 episode



# PRODUCED BY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // AUGUST | SEPTEMBER 2019



HOW TO WATCH A  
DOCUMENTARY IN  
ONE MINUTE  
P. 54

ELIMINATING  
HOLLYWOOD'S  
MOTHERHOOD  
PENALTY  
P. 42

## SUZANNE TODD

"A SMALL PART OF ME FEELS JEALOUS.  
I WISH I WAS COMING OUT OF FILM  
SCHOOL TODAY, BECAUSE I FEEL LIKE THE  
OPPORTUNITIES ARE SO VERY DIFFERENT."



16 EMMY® NOMINATIONS INCLUDING OUTSTANDING LIMITED SERIES

“A MASTERPIECE.”

NPR

FROM THE EMMY® AWARD WINNING DIRECTOR OF 13<sup>TH</sup>  
AVA DUVERNAY

# WHEN THEY SEE US



FYC.NETFLIX.COM





Ownership of 1501 Broadway is proud and pleased to welcome the **Producers Guild of America** to the iconic **Paramount Building** in New York, home to many award-winning entertainment industry tenants. We offer both contemporary and traditional office space from 600 to 31,000 SF.

*Paramount*  
BUILDING

For more information, please contact:

**Arthur J. Mirante, II**  
Principal & Tri-State President  
212.729.1896  
[arthur.mirante@avisonyoung.com](mailto:arthur.mirante@avisonyoung.com)

**Michael Gottlieb**  
Principal  
212.729.6809  
[michael.gottlieb@avisonyoung.com](mailto:michael.gottlieb@avisonyoung.com)

**Joseph Gervino**  
Senior Associate  
212.858.0798  
[joseph.gervino@avisonyoung.com](mailto:joseph.gervino@avisonyoung.com)

**Dominic Perkovic**  
Associate  
212.735.8553  
[dominic.perkovic@avisonyoung.com](mailto:dominic.perkovic@avisonyoung.com)



[paramountbuilding.com](http://paramountbuilding.com)

**AVISON  
YOUNG**





APPLAUSE

ON AIR





★ **20 EMMY® NOMINATIONS** ★  
INCLUDING **OUTSTANDING COMEDY SERIES**

---

"STILL MARVELOUS,  
SEASON 2 IS AS DAZZLING,  
AS YOU HOPED FOR AND EVEN MORE AMBITIOUS. IT'S TRULY REVOLUTIONARY."

— THE DAILY BEAST

---

"THE MOST-NOMINATED  
COMEDY THIS YEAR"

— VARIETY

---

## WINNER

**PRODUCERS GUILD AWARD** OUTSTANDING PRODUCER OF EPISODIC TELEVISION, COMEDY

**SCREEN ACTORS GUILD AWARD** OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE BY AN ENSEMBLE IN A COMEDY SERIES

**WRITERS GUILD AWARD** COMEDY SERIES

**AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE AWARD** TV PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

**CRITICS' CHOICE AWARD** BEST COMEDY SERIES

Marvelous ★

amazon  
prime video



100 FILMS. THREE DECADES. ONE STATE.

THE JUNGLE BOOK FORREST GUMP DECEIVER  
DIE HARD: WITH A VENGEANCE THE HUNLEY  
RECKLESS VICE CHILL FACTOR THE PRINCE  
CHIEFS PRINCIPALS THAT DARN CAT OF TIDES  
THE PROGRAM ACE VENTURA: WHO'S YOUR CADDY?  
WHEN NATURE CALLS THE STRANGERS THE QUEEN  
SOMETHING CHASERS GREAT SCARLETT RADIO  
TO TALK ABOUT SEPARATE BUT EQUAL SANTINI THE LORDS  
WILD HEARTS CAN'T BE BROKEN THE NOTEBOOK OF DISCIPLINE  
NORTH & SOUTH THE BIG CHILL SWAMP THING  
DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST THE PATRIOT DELIVERANCE  
ARMY WIVES MR. MERCEDES THE BAY  
THE ABYSS FORCES OF NATURE SHAG  
THE LEGEND OF BAGGER VANCE

**CASH REBATE IN 30 DAYS**

**30% CASH REBATE ON SPEND • 25% CASH REBATE ON WAGES**  
**NO SALES TAX ON PURCHASES (UP TO 8%)**

FilmSC.com  
803.737.0490



South Carolina  
Just right. 



GAME OF THRONES<sup>®</sup>  
Outstanding Drama Series

SUCCESSION  
Outstanding Drama Series

**BARRY**  
Outstanding Comedy Series

**VEEP**  
Outstanding Comedy Series



# FOR YOUR EMMY<sup>®</sup> consideration

**CHERNOBYL**  
Outstanding Limited Series

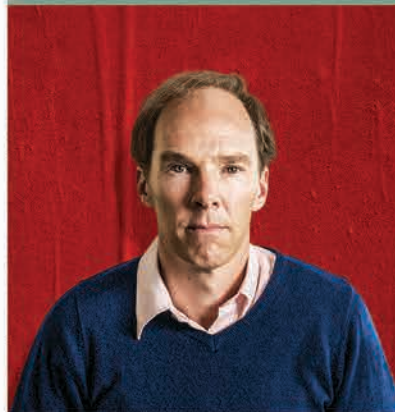
*sharp* **Objects**  
Outstanding Limited Series

**BREXIT**  
Outstanding Television Movie

**DEADWOOD**  
THE MOVIE  
Outstanding Television Movie

Congratulations  
to our Emmy nominees

**HBO<sup>®</sup>**



©2019 Home Box Office, Inc. All rights reserved.  
HBO<sup>®</sup> and related channels and service marks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc.



46

LESLYE HEADLAND

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NOAH FECKS

## FEATURES

26

### THE COVER: SUZANNE TODD

The prolific producer who has a love of musicals, plays a mean hand of poker and is a game-show nut

36

### BALANCING ACT

James D. Stern juggles a panoply of passions.

42

### TOPPLING THE MOTHERHOOD PENALTY

Parental inclusion benefits everyone.

46

### GOING IN DEEP

*Russian Doll* creator Leslye Headland journeys into the psyche.

54

### INSTANT GRATIFICATION

Get your documentary fix in 60 seconds.



MY DINNER WITH  
*Herve*

Outstanding Television Movie

LAST WEEK TONIGHT®  
WITH JOHN OLIVER

Outstanding Variety Talk Series  
Outstanding Interactive Program

JANE FONDA  
IN FIVE ACTS

Outstanding Documentary Or Nonfiction Special

LEAVING  
NEVERLAND

Outstanding Documentary Or Nonfiction Special



# FOR YOUR EMMY® consideration

THE  
I N V E N T O R  
OUT FOR BLOOD IN SILICON VALLEY

Outstanding Documentary Or Nonfiction Special

the sentence

Exceptional Merit In Documentary Filmmaking

SONG OF PARKLAND

Outstanding Children's Program



Outstanding Children's Program

Congratulations  
to our Emmy® nominees





A large, close-up photograph of a man in a dark suit, looking down with a somber expression while holding a dark glass bottle. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting like a bar or office.

9 EMMY<sup>®</sup>  
NOMINATIONS  
INCLUDING  
OUTSTANDING  
DRAMA SERIES



“EXPLOSIVE.”

FILM INQUIRY

OZARK



FYC.NETFLIX.COM



A photograph of Ali Stroker, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a bright yellow off-the-shoulder dress, sitting in a wheelchair and holding a Tony Award trophy high in her right hand. She is smiling and standing on a stage with a brick wall and city lights in the background.

58

## ALI STROKER MAKES TONY AWARDS HISTORY

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY GETTYIMAGES

## DEPARTMENTS

13

### FROM THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Sweet smell of success

14

### ODD NUMBERS

Bye, Bye, Bye

16

### OPEN DOORS

New tools for inclusivity

18

### PRODUCERS SURVIVAL GUIDE

Updates on the writer/agency conflict

20, 52

### ON THE SCENE

NY events, Produced By LA conference

25

### OVERHEARD

We're all ears at the conference

34

### GOING GREEN

Animated about the environment

58

### EXPAND YOUR AUDIENCE

Reaching viewers with disabilities

63

### ABOVE AND BEYOND

The Documentary Screening Salon

64

### MARKING TIME

65

### MEMBER BENEFITS

66

### NEW MEMBERS

67

### PGA HEALTH

68

### FAQ: THE PRODUCERS MARK

70

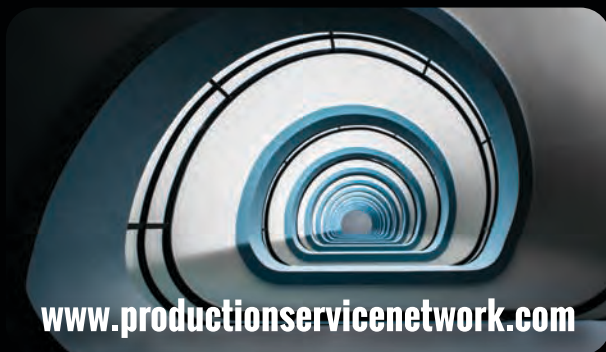
### BEST ON-SET PHOTO OF ALL TIME

As good as it gets

**CONNECTING PRODUCERS TO  
LOCAL FILM SUPPORT AND  
CASH-BACK INCENTIVES  
AT NO ADDED COST IN 50 COUNTRIES**

**PRODUCTION SERVICE NETWORK  
YOUR PARTNER TO SHOOT WORLDWIDE**

**ONE-STOP SHOP**



**[www.productionservicenetwork.com](http://www.productionservicenetwork.com)**



**PRESIDENTS**

Gail Berman Lucy Fisher

**VICE PRESIDENTS, MOTION PICTURES**

Reginald Hudlin Jon Kilik

**VICE PRESIDENTS, TELEVISION**

Gene Stein Lydia Tenaglia

**VICE PRESIDENT, NEW MEDIA**

Jenni Ogden

**VICE PRESIDENT, AP COUNCIL**

Melissa Friedman

**VICE PRESIDENTS, PGA EAST**

William Horberg Kay Rothman

**TREASURER**

Megan Mascena Gaspar

**SECRETARIES OF RECORD**

Mark Gordon Hawk Koch

**PRESIDENTS EMERITI**

Gary Lucchesi Lori McCreary

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/COO**

Vance Van Petten

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/COO**

Susan Sprung

**NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Stephanie Allain	Charles P. Howard
Michael Ambers	Lynn Hylden
Nina Yang Bongiovi	Paulette Lifton
Stacy Burstin	Rosemary Lombard
John Canning	James Lopez
Yolanda T. Cochran	Betsy Ockerlund Nolte
Donald De Line	Bruna Papandrea
Mike Farah	Kristine Pregot
Donna Gigliotti	Charles Roven
Gary Goetzman	Peter Saraf
Jennifer A. Haire	Angela Victor
Marshall Herskovitz	Ian Wagner

**EDITOR**

Peggy Jo Abraham

## MOON TIDE

**PARTNER & BRAND PUBLISHER**

Emily S. Baker

**CREATIVE DIRECTOR**

Ajay Peckham

**COPY EDITOR**

Bob Howells

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Noah Fecks

**ADVERTISING**

Ken Rose  
818-312-6880 | [ken@moontidemedia.com](mailto:ken@moontidemedia.com)

**MANAGING PARTNERS**

Charles C. Koones Todd Klawin

**Vol. XV No. 4**

*Produced By* is published six times a year  
by the Producers Guild of America

8530 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 400 Beverly Hills, CA 90211 310-358-9020 Tel. 310-358-9520 Fax	1411 Broadway 15th floor New York, NY 10018 646-766-0770 Tel.
--	--

[www.producersguild.org](http://www.producersguild.org)



# SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

Reflecting on the 11th annual Produced By Conference, which wrapped up in June, we could not be prouder to represent the Guild as your National Executive Directors. In addition to the pleasure of connecting with so many interesting and engaged members of the PGA community, it was the breadth and relevance of the topics covered during panels and conversations that we found so impressive.

A crowd of 1,000 attendees packed the venues at Warner Bros. Studios for the two-day conference. Responding to suggestions and requests from our membership, this year's discussions were the most forward-looking ever, and nearly every session was sold out.

In an environment where producers are facing a rapidly changing landscape in terms of content and distribution, valuable information was presented on the challenges of streaming and podcasting. There was also great interest in the panel on balancing creativity and cost when it comes to new technology.

Jeffrey Katzenberg and Meg Whitman, co-founders of the new digital platform Quibi, broke major news when they revealed that their business model will offer a generous intellectual property policy. After two years, producers can put their content in a longer form and "own their own IP."

As more and more producers turn their talents to stories that have social impact or give voice to the underrepresented, new discussions and pitches are entering the production realm. The panels Content With a

Conscience and Representation for Everyone were extremely popular and garnered a great deal of positive post-event coverage. Michael B. Jordan expressed beautifully the importance of choosing a mindful project, saying, "It's about wanting to create bodies of work and tell stories that will make people go home and think thoughts that will weigh heavily on their heart."

Other panels receiving lots of press pickup included the entertaining duo of Michael Douglas and Danny DeVito and the candid conversation between Mindy Kaling and Nancy Myers.

The event wrapped up with a record 600 people participating in a lively Producers Mashup, where seasoned professionals engaged directly with small groups of attendees.

And for those who couldn't be at the conference this year, it was livestreamed for the first time ever from the Steven J. Ross Theater, a move that was cheered by many grateful members.

Congratulations and thank you to all our speakers, staff and volunteers who made the weekend such an overwhelming success. We'd especially like to thank the Conference Chairs: Betsy Beers, Ian Bryce, Tracey Edmonds, Mike Farah and Gene Stein. And a big shout-out to Madelyn Hammond & Associates, Barry Kaplan and Diane Salerno.

We now set our sights on a fantastic Produced By New York conference November 9. These are the perfect moments to celebrate the importance of building connections and community within our thriving industry.



Susan Sprung



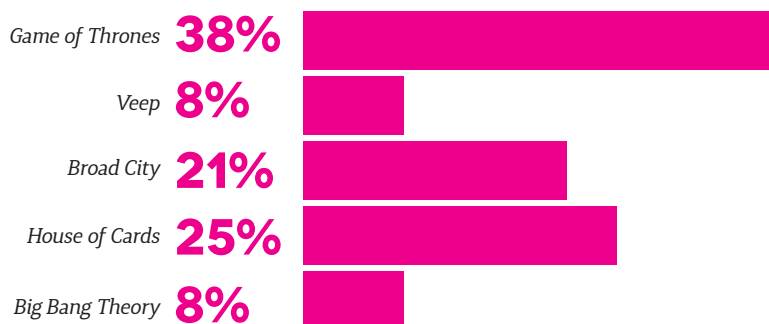
Vance Van Petten

## BYE, BYE, BYE...

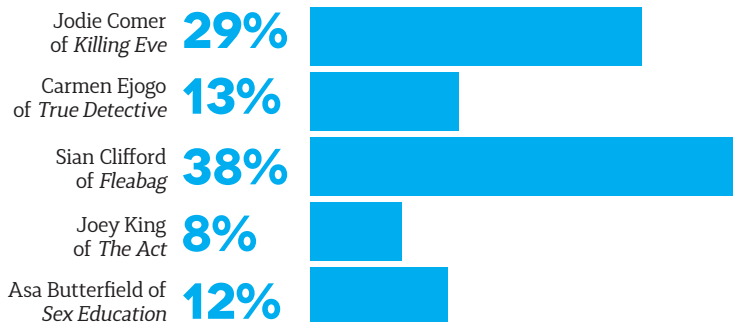
WITH THE EMMYS JUST AROUND THE CORNER, WE REFLECT ON SOME FAVORITE TV SHOWS WE'RE SAYING GOODBYE TO THIS YEAR. BUT NOT TO WORRY—THERE ARE SOME GREAT NEW ONES TAKING THEIR PLACE THAT ARE BOUND TO SATISFY YOUR VIEWING APPETITE.



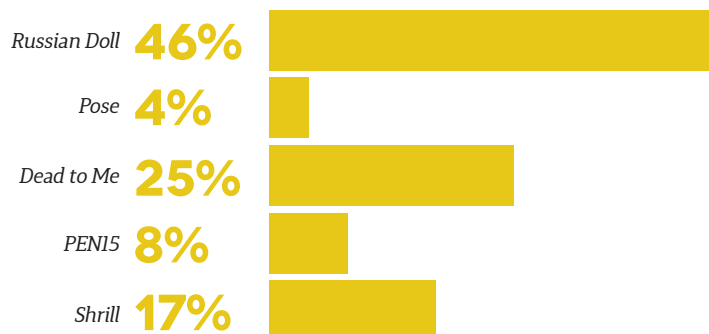
### WHICH SHOW WILL YOU MISS THE MOST?



### WHO WILL BE THE BIGGEST BREAKOUT TV STAR?



### WHICH NEW SHOW ARE YOU HOPING WILL HAVE A LONG RUN?





EMMY® NOMINATED FOR  
OUTSTANDING TV MOVIE

“★★★★★”

- THE TIMES (UK)

“AT ITS BEST, IT FEELS CURRENT...  
AND TIMELESS...”

- VULTURE



ANTHONY HOPKINS

EMMA THOMPSON

AMAZON ORIGINAL

# KING LEAR

ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY RICHARD EYRE

FYC | amazon  
prime video

# TIME TO MEASURE UP

## NEW TOOLS FOR INCLUSIVITY FROM “FADE IN” TO OPENING NIGHT

WRITTEN BY DEBORAH CALLA AND LISA KORS

It's a changing world when it comes to inclusivity and the entertainment industry. As producers, we have a responsibility to make sure our projects accurately reflect the demographics of today's society. To help with this mission, activists and organizations are coming up with new tools to facilitate the process.

We know there's a growing awareness about unconscious bias. But how does a producer form an objective analysis about a project in terms of gender, age, disability and LGBTQ+ portrayal?

One of the first efforts came from a partnership between Google, the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media and USC's Viterbi School of Engineering Signal Analysis and Interpretation Laboratory (SAIL). It was a face-tracking and audio analysis powered by machine learning (called GD-IQ), which was used to educate studios on how often women are seen or speak in movies. The results revealed that the idea of gender parity didn't exist, and the number of female characters was still abysmally low. Based on this concrete evidence of how pervasive the problem was, the Institute's mission became even more critical and timely.

Around this same time, screenwriter Christina Hodson (*Bumblebee*, *Batgirl*) posed the idea that rather than analyze a finished product, why not apply the concept of inclusion right from page one of a screenplay? Energized by this thought, she approached fellow writer John August and within weeks, a new tool called Gender Analysis was included in his free Highland 2 software. Hodson says, “It made sense to me that we can do a lot before (the scripts) even leave our desks.”



Geena Davis and Madeline Di Nonno of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media



Building on Highland's Gender Analysis tool that tabulated the number of female characters and amount of dialogue, Final Draft, along with the Geena Davis Institute, took the concept and process to the next level. They understood the very real notion of unconscious bias and how pervasive it could be. Working together, the two created an Inclusivity Analysis Feature that quickly measures ethnicity, gender, age, disability or any other definable character trait. This is a free add-on for all Final Draft users. Scott McMenamin, President of Final Draft, explains, “Our goal is to give filmmakers maximum flexibility to measure character traits without imposing our own definitions on

what is measured.”

Madeline Di Nonno, CEO of the Geena Davis Institute, says she hopes the data and research tools become “the gold standard for measuring gender equality and intersectionality in storytelling for the entertainment industry.”

With systems like these already available and future enhancements in the pipeline, producers now have the ability to make sure our work accurately reflects the world we live in, right from “FADE IN.”

For more information, go to Geena Davis Institute of Gender in Media at [seejane.org](http://seejane.org), Final Draft at [finaldraft.com](http://finaldraft.com) and Highland at [quoteunquoteapps.com/highland-2](http://quoteunquoteapps.com/highland-2). ■



1 1 E M M Y<sup>®</sup> N O M I N A T I O N S

---

OUTSTANDING COMEDY SERIES

---

WINNER 3 TCA AWARDS  
INCLUDING  
PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a black long-sleeved dress, is seated at a table covered with a white cloth. She is looking directly at the camera while holding an open book. The book's cover features a quote. On the table, there are several ornate brass candlesticks with lit candles, creating a warm, dimly lit atmosphere. The background is a dark, paneled wall.

**"A REDEMPITIVE  
MASTERPIECE."**

- TIME

AMAZON ORIGINAL

**FLEABAG**

FYC

amazon  
prime video

# PRODUCERS SURVIVAL GUIDE

The conflict between the WGA and talent agencies is entering its fifth month. Here is an update on resources available to producers to help navigate the new landscape.

## WGA STAFFING & DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM

The WGA is expanding its online tools for producers who are seeking writers. The tools are offered through a web-based portal called the WGA Staffing & Development Platform. The portal can be found at [wgaplatform.org](http://wgaplatform.org). Producers create individual accounts, which will be organized by company as well.

This platform includes the previously developed Find-a-Writer database, the Weekly Feature Memo of available specs and pitches, and the Open Writing Assignment tools. It also includes the recently launched Weekly TV Development Memo, which offers TV pilot specs and pitches.

## FIND A WRITER PLUS

The Find-a-Writer database is still on the WGA's website (at both [wga.org](http://wga.org) and [wgae.org](http://wgae.org)). Inside the platform, however, is an expanded version of the database,

available only to producers with accounts for this platform. It includes information about writers' availability and development interests. The database also has a web form for sending an email to any WGA member.

## OWAs

The WGA's plan for Open Writing Assignment listings has become clearer. Producers can list open projects, and WGA writers will be able to submit their expression of interest in up to three OWAs per month. The submissions can include a note from the writer about why the project appeals to them, as well as a writing sample and a description of the writer's experience.

## WRITER LISTS

Another tool on the WGA Staffing & Development Platform allows producers to create and annotate lists of writers. Producers can create as many lists as they

want, with any number of writers, and add notes or annotations. The lists include each writer's up-to-date availability information and a button to open an email form to send a direct message to the writer.

## GENERAL MEETINGS TOOL

Writers and producers are also able to contact each other to express interest in having a general meeting. Writers are limited in how many meetings they can request each month. Producers have no limit.

## AND MORE...

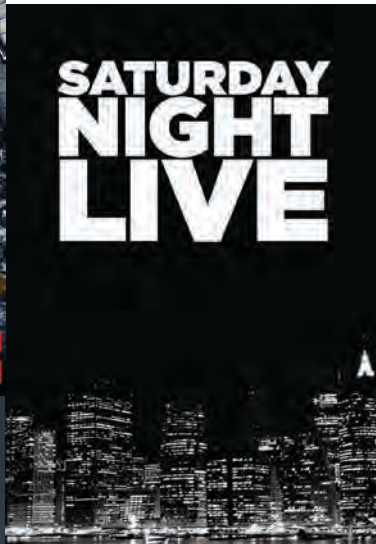
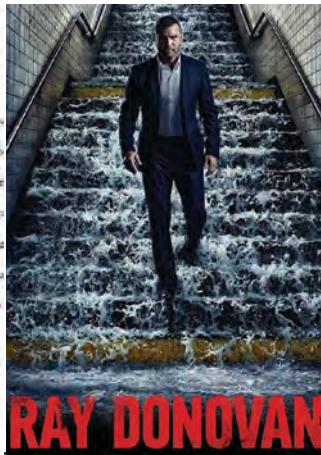
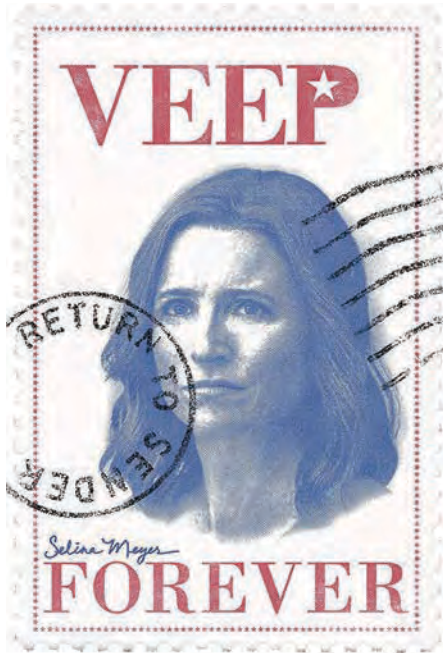
Additional tools are planned, but the WGA wants to know what tools producers want prioritized. Let the WGA know how it can improve the apps it rolls out on the platform and what other information or functions would help you accomplish your goals, and find and contact the writers you need for your projects. Producers can provide the WGA with feedback at [directories@wga.org](mailto:directories@wga.org). ■







To our clients  
and ALL the 2019 EMMY nominees  
**CONGRATULATIONS!**



- LED Pre-lit Airline Cabins
- Cockpits
- Aviation Props & Set Dressing

888.Mock-Ups (662-5877)  
AEROMockUps.COM



## SOLD-OUT SUCCESS

PRODUCED BY CONFERENCE 2019, JUNE 8-9, WARNER BROS. STUDIOS

The Los Angeles Produced By Conference was a major success, with a record number of attendees enjoying informative panels and riveting discussions, followed by many opportunities to network with fellow producers from around the world. Leading names in film, television and new media who took part in the event included Quibi founders Jeffrey Katzenberg and Meg Whitman, Michael Douglas, Danny DeVito, Toby Emmerich, Peter Roth, Ava DuVernay, Mindy Kaling, Nancy Myers and many more.

A crowd favorite was The Art & Craft of Pitching, where selected pitches were evaluated by top-tier creatives from Funny Or Die, SideCar, Will Packer Productions and A+E Networks. Other popular panels tackled unconventional ways of producing horror and the importance of content with a conscience. New this year were sessions devoted to the rapidly changing landscape of producing. Discussions on challenges in streaming and podcasting, data-driven production, and balancing creativity and cost with new technology drew huge crowds.

Some 600 attendees took part in the unique Producers Mashup, where they had the opportunity to assemble in smaller groups and get personal career advice from a stellar roster of veteran producers and development executives.

The Produced By Conference is the only event of its kind, a not-to-be missed opportunity to connect with the best and brightest in the industry. This year's theme of "The Place to Be ... For the Business You're In" certainly lived up to its name.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JORDAN STRAUSS AND MICHAEL MARTIN



Jonathan King, Cindy Holland, Ava DuVernay, Berry Welsh, Jane Rosenthal representing *When They See Us*



Diane Salerno with Sevan Leipziger and Jessamy Ross of Delta



The always-passionate PGA National Executive Director/COO Vance Van Petten



Mindy Kaling and Nancy Meyers

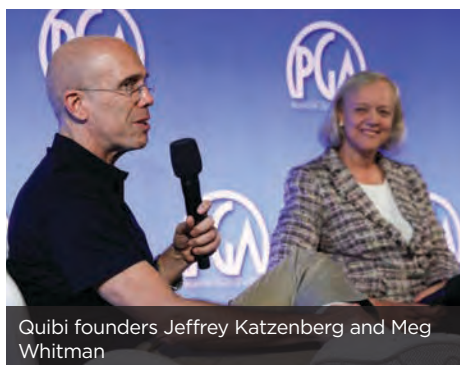


The Producers Mashup draws a record-breaking crowd of 600 attendees.



PGA Presidents Lucy Fisher and Gail Berman with Heather Stewart of General Motors





Quibi founders Jeffrey Katzenberg and Meg Whitman



Michelle Byrd, Managing Dir. of PGA East, PGA East Chair Kay Rothman



Danny DeVito, Michael Douglas



Paul Cosentino, Bill Hays of GreenSlate with PGA Nat. Executive Director/COO Susan Sprung



Daniela Hamilton, Steven Calcote, John FK Parenteau, Lillian Diaz-Przybyl



Leila Jarman, Lori McCreary, Tricia Melton, Steven Canals, Scott Silveri



Gail Berman, Mike Farah, Barry Jossen, James F. Lopez offer advice at the Art & Craft of Pitching.



Conference speakers have a laugh in the popular Film in Illinois & GreenSlate Speakers Lounge.



Peter Roth, Toby Emmerich of Warner Bros.



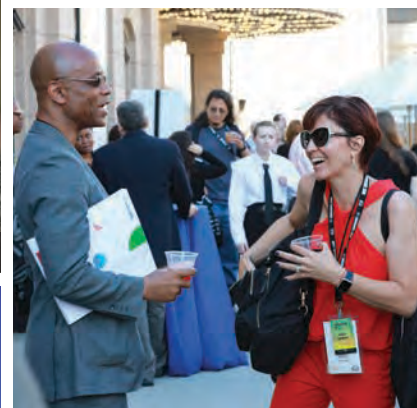
**PRODUCED BY CONFERENCE 2019, JUNE 8-9,  
WARNER BROS. STUDIOS** *(continued)*



A lively discussion at the Producers Mashup



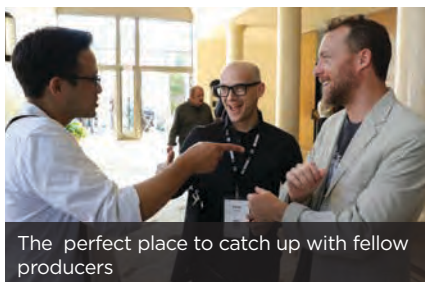
Producer Yeardeley Smith



Plenty of open-air meeting spots at Warner Bros.



Agnes Chu, Craig Erwich on The Streamers panel



The perfect place to catch up with fellow producers



Networking between sessions



Dan Goor, Dee Harris-Lawrence, Stephanie Allain, Hayden Schlossberg, Alexandra Rushfield, Leslye Headland



Matthew Clark, Sean Dunckley, Daniel Sasaki, Brandon Trost headline the panel New Technology: Balancing Creativity and Cost.





Michael B. Jordan, Alana Mayo



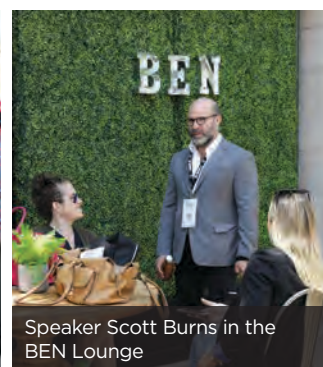
Peter Micelli, Tracey Edmonds, Michael Thorn, Amy Israel, Jenny Groom, Nick Pepper



Ava DuVernay and Netflix's Cindy Holland



Dustin Thomason, K.J. Matthews, Ian Cooper, Kate Krantz, Marci Wiseman, Trevor Macy, Sam Shaw for panel on producing horror content



Speaker Scott Burns in the BEN Lounge



Jade McQueen with Ted Gagliano of Twentieth Century Fox



John Canning leads a panel on integrated data-driven production.



**PGA participants JOIN Now & SAVE \$100:**

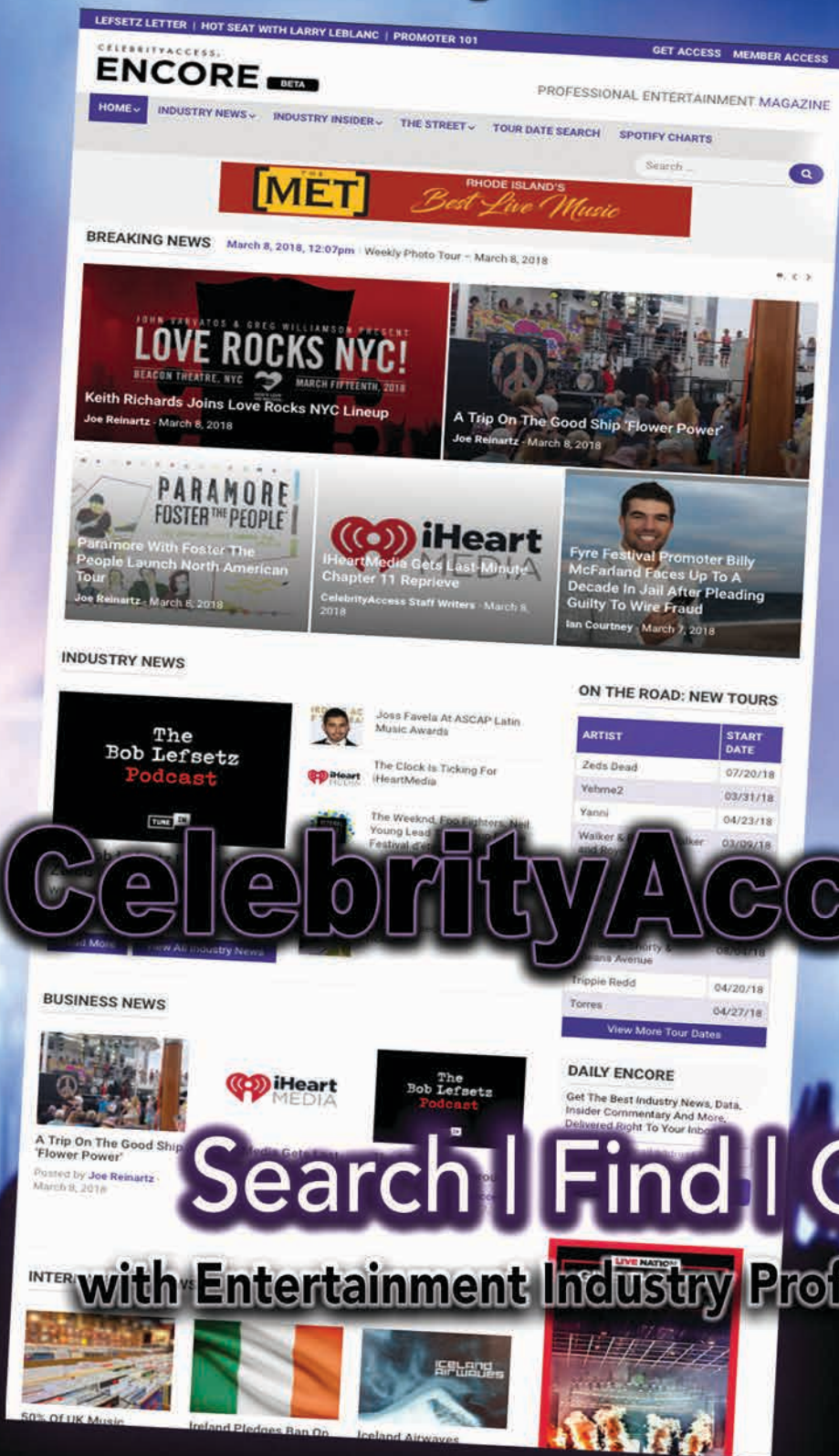
**Enter Coupon Code: PGA100**



**Revolutionize  
Your  
Business  
Today**

**Visit and Join:**

**CelebrityAccess.com**



**Search | Find | Connect**

**with Entertainment Industry Professionals Worldwide**

**303.350.1700 | inquiries@celebrityaccess.com**

**The Independent Voice for Entertainment Professionals**



# LISTENING IN

THE 2019 LA PRODUCED BY CONFERENCE AT WARNER BROS. STUDIOS WAS THE PLACE TO SEE AND BE SEEN. AND THERE WAS PLENTY TO HEAR AS WELL...



## HEARD

"Being here is a huge honor for us."  
**Gabriela Gonzalez**, *selected to pitch a project at the Art and Craft of Pitching*

• • •

"I met one of my closest friends at Produced By the first year and we're still friends today."

**Melissa Friedman**, *Producer/PGA member*

• • •

"What's valuable to us as a vendor is everybody trusts the PGA. Being here is super efficient, a really awesome return for us."

**Mike Dearborn**, *Co-founder of TIM*

• • •

"It is friendship, it is relationships. It's all about keeping in touch and being with people you care about."

**Danny DeVito**

• • •

"The people who do not have any connections, no nepotistic ways at all of getting into this industry—how do we bring those who have zero access into these spaces and give them an opportunity to know that their voice matters?"

**Leila Jarman**, *Women's Voices Now*

"I wish someone had said to me in the harder times that this is going to mean something to you later; this is going to matter."

**Ava DuVernay**

• • •

"It's my first time here and I'm already meeting amazing people from all over the world, like-minded producers in the same genre."

**Tamia Dow**, *Filmmaker*

• • •

"Be gracious when hearing a 'no.' Hopefully if the interaction is great, we will say come back again."

**Vernon Sanders**, *Co-head of TV, Amazon*

• • •

"If a producer doesn't have a routine, a healthy routine, literally, physically and every other way, it's impossible to manufacture the cycle over and over long enough to make it all the way through the process of producing from concept to completion."

**Kip Konwiser**, *The Money Pool*



## OVERHEARD



"They give out really good free pens."



"I suck at raising money, so I thought I'd try to find some people who are good at it."



"The worst part of being a producer is having to tell talent they have to do something again."



"Who doesn't love food trucks?"





THE COVER



# Suzanne TODD

Quick—what do mischievous moms, dog parks, memory loss, the Beatles, a white rabbit and Dr. Evil have in common? If you said producer Suzanne Todd, you’ve been paying attention. These are just a few of the themes in the many successful films this creative talent has brought to the big screen. As if making it in Hollywood were not enough, along her journey Todd has somehow found the time to give back in a very meaningful way. Her calendar is packed with pitches, casting calls and shoots, but you’ll also find charity poker games and mentoring sessions on her schedule. Yes, Todd is one of those rare people whom you swear has more hours in her day than you do.

Currently she has not one, but three major movies coming out this year. In the fantasy adventure *Noelle*, Anna Kendrick stars as the daughter of Santa Claus. And Todd is making two films with Adam DeVine: *Jexi*, co-starring Rose Byrne, and *Magic Camp*, based on a story by Steve Martin.

Todd’s passion is also palpable when talking about motherhood. As a single mom of three, she knows a thing or two because just like the commercial says, “She’s seen a thing or two.” Once when asked about motherhood tips, she was quoted as saying, “Don’t be hard on yourself, like thinking that you could have done more. Even in small things like making the best lunches.” Now what parent can’t relate to that?

From her own childhood spent watching her favorite movies over and over to the improbable and original way she raised money for her first student film, this is one determined producer. And when Todd speaks of the unique qualities that women bring to filmmaking, you quickly understand her message because, of course, you realize these are the special traits she possesses and brings to *her* work. And then you’re really, really glad she had the good sense to take a gamble and sit across from Dick Clark on *The \$25,000 Pyramid*. Read on ...

INTERVIEW BY PEGGY JO ABRAHAM



## Complete Film, TV, and Commercial Production Services

### Shooting Locations

30 Digital Stages | NY Street, Blue Sky Tank & The Alley

### Production Resources

Lighting & Grip | Wood Moulding | Manufacturing & Special Effects | Art Services

### Post Production Services

6 Full Service Theatres & Screening Rooms | Digital Post, Editorial & QC Services  
Stock Footage Library

Sound Services by  at Paramount

5555 Melrose Avenue, Hollywood, CA 90038

323.956.8811

[TheStudiosAtParamount.com](http://TheStudiosAtParamount.com)



**YOU'VE DONE SO MANY TYPES OF MOVIES, AND MANY OF THEM HAVE BEEN HIT COMEDIES. WHAT IT IS ABOUT THOSE THAT MAKES YOU GRAVITATE TO THEM?**

On the *Bad Moms* movies that I made last year and the year before, I find that people who continue to talk to me about having seen the first movie and the second movie is that everybody loves to laugh. It's trying times right now, obviously. Going to a theater and having that shared experience of laughing in a room with lots of other people who are laughing is unique to movies and live theater and just a few other things. But I also find it really interesting when people talk to me, especially about comedy, that usually they're not referencing the thing that made them laugh the most; they're referencing the thing that touched them the most—that relatability of the characters and the relatability of the struggle and this idea, in the case of *Bad Moms*, that we all want to be great moms and great parents, and we all struggle to do our best, and we all judge ourselves too harshly for our mistakes.

**YES, AND I CAN SEE HOW THAT RESONATES THROUGHOUT ONE'S WHOLE LIFE BECAUSE ONCE A MOM, ALWAYS A MOM.**

True, and being a producer is in some way like being a mom to hundreds of people for short periods of time while you're making the movie together. I don't



BEING A  
PRODUCER IS  
IN SOME WAY  
LIKE BEING  
A MOM TO  
HUNDREDS  
OF PEOPLE  
FOR SHORT  
PERIODS OF  
TIME WHILE  
YOU'RE  
MAKING  
THE MOVIE  
TOGETHER.”

think it's a coincidence that there are a lot of amazing female producers. There are a lot of amazing male producers as well, but I do think there are some aspects to the job that are inherently, particularly female. Mothering and caretaking, and problem-solving and all those kinds of things, I think apply to both motherhood and producing.

**PRODUCERS WEAR SO MANY HATS. WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE JOB?**

I generally like all the parts for different reasons. I will say when you're actually making the movie, it's probably more interesting than when you're in your car driving around to the 12 places that you're going to pitch the movie. That kind of “putting on your tap shoes” part of it is not particularly my favorite. I think really getting into the nuts and bolts of it in a room with a writer, developing the script, being on set with the directors and crew, making it happen in the cutting room, reshaping what you thought it was going to be into what it's really going to evolve into. All of those, the marketing, the publicity—I like all aspects of it. If I had a least favorite, it's probably the tap dancing/pitching.

**YOU'VE BEEN SUCH A SUPPORTER OF WOMEN, GIVING THEM SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE CONTENT AND TO ACT. HOW WOULD YOU ASSESS THE**



**SITUATION TODAY IN TERMS OF WHAT YOU'RE SEEING WITH FEMALE EMPOWERMENT AND INFLUENCE WITHIN THE INDUSTRY?**

I think it's amazing. Maybe this is too honest, but frankly there's a small part of me that feels jealous. I wish that I was coming out of film school today, because I feel like the opportunities are so very different. When I was hitting the industry in 1986, there were so few women in those top jobs, and few women directing and few women producing. It really did seem, not like an impossible goal, but like a very, very difficult goal. I remember Lauren Shuler Donner being so nice to me and kind of taking me under her wing. And Sherry Lansing, who I'll never forget—the first time I had lunch with her, and everything that came out of

her mouth was just a pearl of wisdom. But there weren't a lot of women in those positions. When you look at the landscape of creatives, of women now, writers and directors, showrunners and other producers—it really has changed just in the space of my career. I hope that we are moving now into a next phase where the stories that women want to tell aren't particularly women stories, and it doesn't just have to be females directing very female movies.

**IS THERE ANY OTHER BIG CHANGE YOU'VE SEEN IN WHAT YOU DO SINCE YOU STARTED IN THE BUSINESS?**

I feel like in the last five years, I want to say everything has changed, other than the things that will never change. So the things that will never change are the characters, the stories, the storytelling,

taking a look at the human condition and the perspective that we bring to film. But 95% of everything else has changed, even the conversations. You talk about material and it used to be, "Is the story better suited for a movie? Is it better suited as a TV series?" That was kind of it. Now with every story you take on, with every character you come across, you're looking at, "Should this be a 10-minute mobile series on Quibi? Should this be something direct for the web? Should this be a limited series on cable, or streaming or network?" There are so many different formats now. There are a lot of different ways to make it work, and so you're looking at everything through multiple lenses of how to do the best version of it. I have projects I'm developing in all these various formats, but it's also new territory. So it's both exciting and challenging.



# PROTECTION

BODYGUARD AND SECURITY SERVICES PROVIDED  
EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY



**GIBRALTAR**  
SECURITY SERVICES, INC

GREGORY HARRISON AS CEO, CHIEF SECURITY OFFICER SPECIALTY: CLOSE PROTECTION

MAILING: 325 N. MAPLE DR. STE 5149 BEVERLY HILLS CA 90210

PHONE: (424) 335-7555 TOLL FREE: (833) OUR-DUTY

EMAIL: [INFO@GIBRALTARSECURITYSERVICE.COM](mailto:INFO@GIBRALTARSECURITYSERVICE.COM) WEBSITE: [GIBRALTARSECURITYSERVICE.COM](http://GIBRALTARSECURITYSERVICE.COM)



**AND NOW YOU NOW HAVE TO CONSIDER SO MANY TYPES OF AUDIENCES.**

True. You're looking at the different ways in which people consume these different kinds of entertainment, and the person who's going to watch the 10-minute show on Quibi, most likely on their phone, is a different demographic than some of the other places where you're going to try and put material out. So then that becomes a part of the conversation. I never try to make anything for someone else. I like to think I'm always making everything for myself. Because if I don't like it, I don't want to make it. If it's something that I wouldn't watch, I won't make it. I'm just never going to do that. I wouldn't be good at it. But I do think this becomes part of our business decisions now. What is something that's interesting to me that would also be interesting to people in these different shapes and sizes of entertainment? Which, like I said, is both exciting and terrifying.

**YOU SEEM VERY INDEPENDENT AND INTENT ON CHARTING YOUR OWN COURSE. I READ ABOUT FILMING *AUSTIN POWERS* AND HOW SOMEONE ADVISED YOU NOT TO DO IT BECAUSE IT WOULD BASICALLY BE THE END OF YOUR CAREER.**

Yes. I had one head of a studio pass and say to me, "You have a reputation as a really nice girl, as a good girl, and this will ruin you," which is kind of hysterical, of course, because that spawned three movies and a franchise. And I think there isn't a day that goes by where somebody isn't quoting one of the many, many memorable lines from those three movies.

**IS THERE ANY TYPE OF FILM OR PROJECT YOU HAVEN'T DONE THAT YOU'RE STILL YEARNING TO DO?**

I tell you what I'm always trying to do more of because the funny thing is that I've only done one: *Across the Universe*. If you had asked me when I first came out

of film school what I was going to do, I would have told you that I only wanted to do musicals. Because musicals are really my jam, my thing, my happy place. I, weirdly, know the lyrics to basically every Broadway musical ever done since the dawn of time.

**YOUR SISTER, JENNIFER, AND YOU HAVE BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL TOGETHER, AND APART. WHAT COMES TO MIND FOR ME IS, "WHAT WAS IN THE WATER AT THE TODD HOUSE WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP THAT LED TO THESE AMAZING CAREERS?"**

Jen and I were obsessed with watching movies. We would record our favorite ones and watch them 50 times. I mean, I have probably seen *Singing in the Rain* from start to finish without stopping a hundred times. Our parents were going

I think for me it was that time of life we all go through as teenagers. Because being a teenager is difficult anyway and your life is changing, and your body is changing, and the world is changing. And as I said, with Jen and I and dealing with our parents' divorce, I had so many feelings, so many worries, so many things I was trying to figure out. There was something about movies that gave me this perspective that was so eye-opening, that I could watch a movie and understand something better about myself than I had before I saw this film. I could watch a movie and see a character and understand someone else's perspective in a way that I hadn't before. Also just movies make you laugh, movies make you cry. They take you on a journey. Sometimes it's escapist and a relief from the real world. And sometimes it actually helps you navigate the real world. So I'm

---

"GROWING UP, I COULD WATCH A MOVIE AND UNDERSTAND SOMETHING BETTER ABOUT MYSELF THAN I HAD BEFORE I SAW THE FILM."

---

through a really bad divorce. We were working hard at our very challenging private school. And we loved movies. Our mom, who worked, would drop us off at this movie theater we had near our house. On a Saturday we would watch one or two or sometimes even three movies. That was how we would spend the day.

**AND THOSE ARE SUCH FORMATIVE YEARS WHEN MOVIES CAN HAVE A BIG INFLUENCE ON YOUR LIFE.**

fortunate that I've been able to be in this space for so long now.

**OK, A RANDOM QUESTION HERE ABOUT SOMETHING I READ AND LOVED, BECAUSE I'M A BIG FAN OF CLASSIC GAME SHOWS. IS IT TRUE THAT YOU BECAME A CONTESTANT ON *THE \$25,000 PYRAMID* TO RAISE MONEY FOR YOUR STUDENT FILM?**

I did. I had a friend who had gone on the show and who had said to me, "Oh, it's





Todd meets the dreaded Lord Zedd on the set of *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: The Movie* (1995)

only a day. It's easy money. Just go." So yeah, I won the money, and that was what I spent it on. I think I won \$28,000. Back then if you went to the top of the pyramid in the bonus round you got \$10,000. I did that twice, and then you win a bit of other money along the way. When I did *Pyramid*, Dick Clark was still the host. After that, because I'm both a game nut and a game-show nut, I went on *Password*, and I got to play with Betty White, which was really cool.

**SPEAKING OF GAMES, IS IT ALSO TRUE YOU'RE AN AWARD-WINNING POKER PLAYER?**

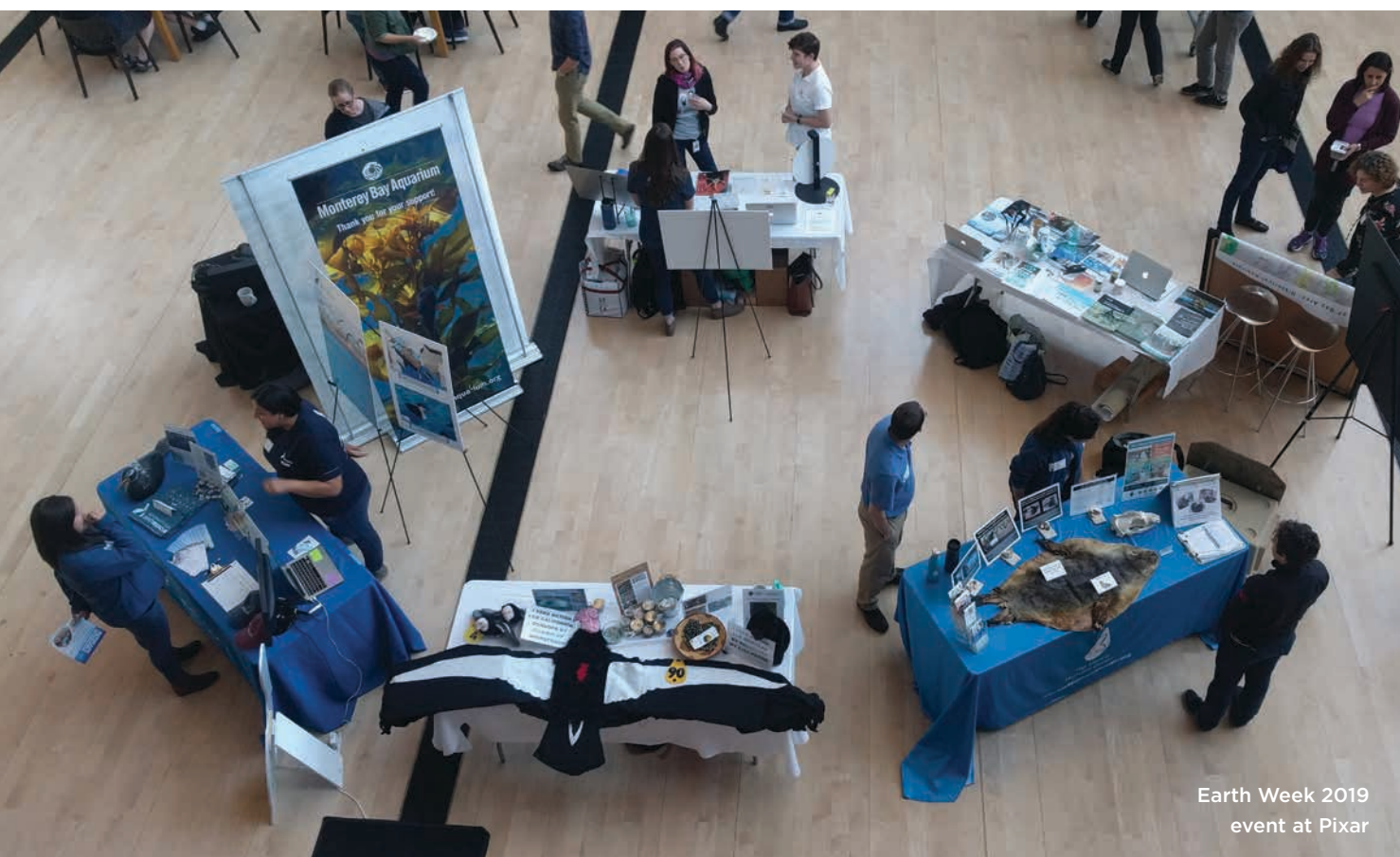
Yes, I do play my fair share of poker and have won a number of tournaments and played at the World Series of poker many times. Over the years, after playing so much poker, I started hosting charity events of my own. So we just hosted our sixth annual tournament for a charity that I'm on the board of called Tia's Hope. It raises money and provides

services for children in long-term care in children's hospitals. We started with City of Hope in Los Angeles, and now we have 11 hospitals across the country. And basically, what we do is when the kids are admitted to the hospital, they get a gift bag which is toys and stuff for them to do and a Visa gift card for their parents. It's very expensive and time-consuming and painful to have children in the hospital, especially for long-term care.

**I KNOW YOU WERE RECENTLY HONORED WITH THE CHRYSALIS AWARD AND YOU HAVE MENTEES AT USC. AS SUCH A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL, CAN YOU SPEAK TO THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING BACK, BECAUSE IT SEEMS LIKE YOU REALLY DO HONOR THAT A LOT.**

I really do. It's so important to me. Through the years, it has shown up in my life in so many different ways. I served for six years on the board of the Archer School

for Girls because girls and education are so important to me. I also work for the Women's Alzheimer's Movement because Alzheimer's affects women, unfortunately, so much more often than men. We're trying to figure out why that is and what preventive measures women can be taking to get ahead of it and understand it better. And Chrysalis is an incredible organization. Anybody who lives in Los Angeles or sadly, in America, understands what a crisis homelessness is. As Chrysalis points out, joblessness is the number one cause of homelessness. What they've been able to do for 66,000 people is put them on a path to employment, with support like resume building, practice interviews and job training. There's something so powerful when you haven't had this in your life recently or maybe ever. There's something so powerful, just sitting down with a person who sits across the table from you and looks you in the eye and says, "I believe in you. You can do this. I'm here for you." ■



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PIXAR ANIMATION STUDIOS

# ANIMATED ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

## PIXAR'S SUSTAINED EFFORT TO GO GREEN

WRITTEN BY AMANDA JONES AND BIZ THORSEN

The world knows Pixar Animation Studios for its hit films, like *Finding Nemo*, *The Incredibles* and *Inside Out*. But most don't know about the studio's eco-friendly practices. What began as a grassroots, employee-led effort 11 years ago has grown to a group of more than 100 employees called the Green Team. Their mission is simple: to encourage environmentally conscious actions from employees and the studio as a whole, as well as the local community surrounding Pixar in the East Bay area.

The studio's leaders have championed Green Team practices over the years, turning them into studio priorities. Ed Catmull, Pixar founder and president, served as the team's executive

sponsor until he retired this year. He passes the role to SparkShort Purl producer Gillian Libbert (p.g.a.), who helps shepherd Green Team initiatives from concept through implementation. "We put so much into every aspect of our filmmaking; it must also pertain to our environmental practices. It's something we have to do because it is morally and ethically the right thing to do," Libbert says.

When it comes to Green Team initiatives, diverse perspectives matter. Animator and Green Team member Alli Sadegiani says, "Our members come from all over the studio. Environmental issues are so universal and multifaceted that it's important to have as many voices and departments represented as possible."





### INTERACTING WITH EMPLOYEES

At a studio with more than 1,200 employees, raising awareness about and reducing waste consumption is a key part of the Green Team's environmental efforts.

Production Coordinator and Green Team member Biz Thorsen says, "It's easy to ignore your consumption. We ask people, during Earth Week especially, to stop and notice."

A rather shocking Earth Week art installation in 2012 hung a week's worth of disposable coffee cups in the main atrium, motivating a one-third reduction in paper cup usage by 2017. The installation in 2018 introduced the replacement of office trash cans with centrally located waste stations throughout campus. Not only did the initiative encourage better recycling habits, but it also eliminated 1,300 plastic liners per day, or 47 miles of plastic a year.

The Green Team keeps busy well beyond April. They partner with the Pixar Cafe staff to promote Green Mondays, to highlight plant-based menu items. They also celebrate Bay Area Bike to Work Day and maintain an internal website.

### INTERACTING WITH THE STUDIO

The Green Team credits a lot of its success to the support of the studio's Facilities team. Pixar was the first company in Alameda County to supply compost, recycling and landfill waste stations. Facilities engineer Brian Torres provides specialty recycling for common landfill items like batteries, electronics, light bulbs, ink cartridges, Styrofoam and plastics. These efforts pay off in a big way. In 2016, 59% of waste was diverted from landfills; by 2018, landfill diversion rose to 82.6%. Also in 2018, Alameda County awarded the team with the Business Efficiency Award for Excellence in Waste Prevention & Reuse.

Patty Bonfilio, head of Facilities & Operations, shares the team's passion for creating a more sustainable daily operation of the studio. From water resources to energy use, Patty has had a profound impact (see side column).

The Green Team has another trusted partner in Cafe chef Jennifer Johnston, who champions sustainable, environmentally friendly practices. Produce from biodiesel delivery trucks is transferred to storage in reusable containers. Dishwashing machines use high-heat sanitizing methods rather than chemical sanitizing that would go into the water supply. All single-use wrapping is compostable or recyclable. As Johnston says, "These decisions can't happen in a vacuum. You have to spend just as much time getting the word out as changing the practice. And it has to be a core company value."

## Additional Studio-Wide Improvements/Practices

### Water

- Pixar uses reclaimed water campus-wide. More than 65% of water is reclaimed. Faucets and toilets are all low-flow.

### Cafe

- Cooking oil is recycled/converted to biofuel.
- All food waste is scraped into a compost bin.
- Cafe has an on-site edible garden.
- Single-use supplies (plates, bowls, utensils) are compostable.

### Bathrooms

- Janitorial supplies are EPA- and LEED-compliant.
- Toilet paper and seat covers are 100% recycled.
- All supplied feminine hygiene products are organic and sustainable.

### Grounds

- Office supplies are reused.
- Broken furniture and construction waste are recycled.
- There are two E-Waste campus drives a year.
- Tree and bush trim waste are composted off-site and used to make industrial compost.

### Energy

- Common-area lighting uses LED technology.
- Exterior windows on campus are tinted.
- Data center cooling system is energy-efficient.

### INTERACTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

The Green Team is involved with the local community with cleanups, volunteering at the elementary school and teaching kids how to sort food waste. Manager of Facilities Operations Pete Schreiber explains, "Participating in the local business community, exchanging ideas, what works, what doesn't—it's invaluable."

Last year the studio hosted the first annual Day of Service for employees to volunteer in the community. The Green Team connected employees with the Oakland Zoo, the Golden Gate Audubon Society and Waterside Workshop.

### DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE

The Green Team has big dreams for the future. These include finding a solution to paper waste in the script department, removing any remaining plastic water bottle use, reducing lighting pollution at night, eliminating single-use plastics studio-wide, switching to solar energy and making each film's production carbon neutral, labeled with an official EMA Green Seal. ■

# BAL ANC ING ACT

**JAMES D. STERN JUGGLES  
A PANOPLY OF PASSIONS**

WRITTEN BY MICHAEL VENTRE







# On the afternoon of June 20, 2019,

James D. Stern waited nervously until the moment the workday ended and he could get home, so he and his son could don their team gear, tune in to the NBA draft and wait until pick No. 7. That's when his beloved Chicago Bulls—Stern has an ownership stake in the club—would choose. And while the team's selection of point guard Coby White represents a quality reinforcement for the Bulls' backcourt, it's likely Stern may have to keep waiting awhile for the Windy City's next championship.

But he's used to waiting. He's a producer, after all—hardly an instant gratification line of work. Case in point: *Murder Mystery*, one of Stern's very latest creative offspring, which debuted in June and became Netflix's biggest weekend opening ever

when it was viewed in 30.9 million households in its first three days. That project, featuring the superstar comic stylings of Adam Sandler and Jennifer Aniston, took about 10 years to get to the screen.

"You get lucky sometimes," he opines about his business. "Then unlucky. Then you get lucky again."

*Murder Mystery*, directed by Kyle Newacheck, is a fish-out-of-water comedy with an Agatha Christie setup about a New York cop and his hairdresser wife who go off on a fancy and long-promised European vacation, only to be ensnared in murder, intrigue and fine dining aboard a billionaire's yacht. The one-sheet sums it up perfectly: "First-class problems. Second-class detectives."

"I knew it was going to be huge, honestly, at the first preview," says Stern, who is currently overseeing the Mike Cahill-helmed drama *Bliss*, starring Salma Hayek and Owen Wilson, and has several other plates spinning in film, TV and on stage. "It was a 500-seat theater, and nobody left. You can just feel it. When you do enough films and theater you don't need something to open to know if it's working or not."

Stern first encountered the project about a decade ago, after James Vanderbilt's script was put into turnaround by Disney. From there, the long journey began. It's a familiar one for career producers: Sink your teeth into a project, and don't let go until it reaches the screen.

"*Murder Mystery* wouldn't exist without Jim Stern," explains Vanderbilt, whose credits include *Zodiac* and *White House Down*.

"He just refused to give up on it. Refused," he adds. "He got involved with



Jennifer Aniston, Adam Sandler  
in *Murder Mystery*

COURTESY OF AMAZON STUDIOS/HILARY BRONWYN GAYLE



GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE

# MORE THAN JUST ANOTHER PRETTY BEACH.

With literally a world of diverse locations, free permitting, a turnkey infrastructure and beaucoup industry incentives, we make filming your production — from every angle. See the unexpected at [sunny.org/film](http://sunny.org/film)



UNDERGROUND  
FORT LAUDERDALE  
*film*

SUGAR PLANTATION, JAMAICA

CHICAGO, IL

HUDSON BAY, CANADA

TOMBSTONE, AZ

ROCKPORT, MA

CHURCHILL DOWNS, KY

THE AMAZON, BRAZIL

SPANISH RIVIERA

For Cash Back film incentives  
on commercial productions,  
contact 954-767-2467



it 10 years ago and put his money behind it just because he liked my script. The amount of times the movie came together and then fell apart was insane. Everybody gave up on it at one time or another. I gave up on it, and it came out of my brain. But not Jim. Every time another studio passed or we lost another actor or director, he just calmly put the thing back together.

"It's like he and (producer) Tripp Vinson finally just willed the thing into existence. And I guarantee you if Netflix hadn't finally come along, Jim would be on the phone today still trying to get *Murder Mystery* made."

Like many projects, *Murder Mystery* came together when it came together. When Sandler and Aniston got on board for their first film together since 2011's *Just Go With It*, the rest fell into place. The film was produced through Stern's Endgame Entertainment, along with Happy Madison Productions and Vinson Films.

"Adam had been interested for a long time," Stern says, "but because of schedules and whatnot, things did not align. But once he came on it went very fast. Then Jennifer came on and it was fast-tracked."

Adding to the serendipitous turn was Netflix's involvement. "For the last few years, we really wanted to do it with Netflix," Stern explains. "It felt like the perfect Netflix movie. I knew the audience would coalesce around the movie." Of the 30 million-plus who initially saw the film after it dropped, just over 13 million watched the streaming service in the U.S. and Canada, while another 17 million viewed from abroad.

But it would be wrong to pigeonhole Stern as simply a purveyor of mainstream comedies and a basketball junkie. He owes much of his success to having a wildly eclectic palette.

Consider *The Old Man and the Gun*, released in 2018, which may have been Robert Redford's swan song as a headliner. Co-starring Casey Affleck and Sissy Spacek, it was based on the true story of Forrest Tucker, a stickup man and escape artist whose career in crime lasted




---

“I LOVE THE THEATER. THE IMMEDIACY AND ELECTRICITY—I GUESS I’M A LITTLE BIT OF AN ADRENALINE JUNKIE.”

---

from his teen years to his sunset years.

"It is very much a movie about an artist who does not want to go gentle into that good night," Stern says of the film, which was written and directed by David Lowery and based on a piece in *The New Yorker* by David Grann. "It was somewhat an homage to *Butch Cassidy*

and the Sundance Kid and *The Sting*. It's a small movie that went flawlessly. It was a dream for me to get to know Redford."

Then there's Stern's theatrical side. He's won Tony Awards for producing *Hairspray* and *The Producers*, a Drama Desk Award for *Stomp* and has had many other forays into the footlights. Recently





he obtained the rights to *Silver Linings Playbook* and is adapting it for the stage.

"Once you get the bug, you never lose it," he says. "I love the theater. I started in the theater; that came first. The immediacy and electricity—I guess I'm a little bit of an adrenaline junkie. There's nothing like Broadway. And you don't have to defray the risks to different territories. It's all there."

Finally there is James D. Stern the political animal. A staunch liberal and brother of former Obama adviser on climate change, Todd Stern, he nevertheless told friends leading up to the 2016 election that he knew Donald Trump was going to win. He discovered more evidence to back up his assertion when making his documentary, *American Chaos*—which he directed—featuring interviews with Trump voters about why

they felt the way they did.

He took flak from some friends on the left for that project, but he felt it was important to explore Trump's popularity. "I told my daughter Trump would win, and she said I was insane," Stern recalls. "I said, 'Come with me and I'll show you.'" The rest, as they say, is history, which is still playing out with dramatic twists almost daily. Stern also has written and directed other projects, including *So Goes the Nation*, another documentary, about the 2004 presidential election.

One of the problems with being James D. Stern is that he has a passion for the theater, film and television, a passion for producing, writing and directing, a passion for politics and a passion for basketball—and they are all competing for his attention.

"My ADD," he says with a laugh, "has served me well." ■

(left) James D. Stern and First Assistant Director Dan Lazarovitz on the set of *Bliss*

Script supervisor Ronit Ravich-Boss, Jennifer Aniston, Adam Sandler, director Kyle Newacheck on *Murder Mystery* set

The illustration depicts a woman with dark hair, wearing a yellow patterned sweater and green pants, standing at the bottom and reaching upwards with her arms. Above her is a dense, floating collection of various items: a large teal circle, several triangles and squares in red, blue, and yellow, a black camera with a film strip, a yellow cat, a baby bottle, a book, a small figure of a person, and other miscellaneous geometric and organic shapes. On the far left, the letters "od" are visible in a large, orange font, likely part of the word "Good".


od

WRITTEN BY MICHELLE BUDNICK  
ILLUSTRATED BY ELENA LACEY

ILLUSTRATED BY ELENA LACEY



## PARENTAL INCLUSION CAN BENEFIT EVERYONE



When you consider the women on your production team, how many of them are open about whether they have children? How early in the hiring process did they disclose this information, and would they have been hired regardless of their family status? These are questions that production moms often ask themselves when they contemplate a career change or interview for a new position—which for a freelancer can be frequently.

Mothers working in production know that being open about their family can change the way they are perceived and have a significant impact on their career progression. It's a phenomenon commonly known as the "motherhood penalty."

A Harvard University study into the phenomenon concluded the motherhood penalty "may account for a significant proportion of the gender gap in pay." It also noted, "Mothers face penalties in hiring, starting salaries and perceived competence, while fathers can benefit from being a parent." In some cases that translates to a father who is a parent being seen as more stable and ambitious, leading to a greater chance of getting a raise or promotion.

Working mothers are often viewed as less productive, more distracted, less stable and less achievement-oriented than their male counterparts. Studies have shown that mothers are 79% less likely to be hired than men or child-free women and offered less money for their work. The pay gap grows larger with each additional child and does not begin to shrink until children are around 10 years old. These penalties can be compounded in the production industry, where the emphasis is on complete availability to work long and often irregular hours. That means fewer opportunities if you're unable to meet those requirements—or you may face exorbitant childcare costs.

The presumption that mothers are unable to perform as well as their male and child-free colleagues is based on outdated stereotypes that working mothers won't prioritize work or will be unavailable when needed. In order to change things, we have to normalize, not stigmatize, production moms. Employers also need to recognize the many skills a working mother develops that are valuable for the production world, such as emotional intelligence, organization, negotiation and time management.

With ages 25 to 35 being career development years *and* the time when women are most likely to have children, females in production are forced to factor in more variables than their male counterparts

# FOR ALL THE MOMENTS WE STAND UP

Since 2008, *Major League Baseball®* has supported Stand Up To Cancer in its mission to fund groundbreaking research and get treatments to patients faster than ever before. Join us as we stand united to show our support for loved ones affected by cancer.

Visit [StandUpToCancer.org/MLB](http://StandUpToCancer.org/MLB)

ZACHARY LEVI



Photo By  
ANDREW ECCLES

Stand Up To Cancer is a division of the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF), a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.  
Major League Baseball trademarks and copyrights are used with permission of Major League Baseball. Visit MLB.com



when deciding whether to start a family.

In order to have true equality, women must be able to pursue their careers at the same time they're having children, instead of being asked to choose which is more important. Progress has been slow, and we are losing a vital voice and a great deal of creative talent in the process.

But there are signs things are moving in a different direction. Galvanized by the Time's Up movement in Hollywood and a larger shift toward addressing societal inequities, employers are starting to recognize the urgent need to redress the inequity and are seeing a positive impact from their efforts.

Building family-friendly policies around a healthy work-life balance is being recognized as an achievable goal for companies that value their teams. At many workplaces, policies like paid parental leave, job sharing, telecommuting and flexible work hours are seen not just as benefits but as necessities to retain a happy and productive workforce.

In Silicon Valley, a group called Parents in Tech Alliance has formed to create "positive and meaningful change for parents working in technology." Companies such as Twitter, Lyft, LinkedIn and Salesforce are among the change makers.

When supervising producer Lindsay Liles took a job on *The Bachelor*, she found a flexibility she couldn't have imagined when she had her daughter in 2018. "We're a show about finding love, falling in love and having a family, so it was important for them to support a healthy

---

“MOTHERS FACE PENALTIES IN HIRING, STARTING SALARIES AND PERCEIVED COMPETENCE, WHILE FATHERS CAN BENEFIT FROM BEING A PARENT.”

---

home life," Lindsay explains. In addition to meeting her breastfeeding needs, the showrunners allowed her to bring her daughter to meetings and to the set on the weekends she didn't have childcare. They also moved her temporarily into casting when she was unable to travel with the show. This kind of treatment and respect encourages loyalty from employees who appreciate being accommodated. "Why would I ever want to leave when they have gone out of their way to support me?" says Lindsay.

Other production companies are following suit. Netflix is leading the way with a range of family-friendly policies that take into consideration both parent and baby. While employees are encouraged to have a healthy work-life balance and be present for their children, the company's bottom line has not been impacted.

Moms-in-Film, a California-based nonprofit with support from Amazon Studios, Panavision and Collab&Play, is committed to raising awareness around inequities for parents in film and TV. They launched the Wee Wagon, a mobile childcare facility designed for use on film

sets. The group has also advocated for California-based films to adopt a Parental Inclusive Clause into their contracts, which asks that productions commit to a 50% to 100% subsidy for the cost of childcare for all members of the cast and crew. They offer a handy list of 10 ways to be inclusive and recognize that childcare is the top issue among parents, with a survey noting that 77% of those working in the entertainment industry have had to turn down work due to a lack of childcare.

With a growing chorus of voices calling for equality, the power of visibly pregnant women on set, and high-level actresses advocating for childcare at work, the future looks brighter for mothers in production. In her book, *Bossypants*, Tina Fey relates that she was writing and producing *30 Rock* from her home and bringing her child to the set, making her an outlier. It's now becoming increasingly easier to envision a future where women in the industry don't have to choose between their children and their creative ambitions as they work to achieve parity at the top levels of this competitive field. ■









# Going in Deep

## WHY WE JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF LESLYE HEADLAND

WRITTEN BY KATIE GRANT

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NOAH FECKS

Since TV's creative sandbox was replaced with a puzzle box, producers are expected to captivate and hold their fickle audiences who are used to watching whatever they want, whenever they want. Be it on-demand, in-demand or bingeing to excess, the game is to keep your fans close with mysteries slowly revealed in flashback until that final puzzle piece is in place—whether that happens by appointment or all in one sitting. Leslye Headland has cracked that mysterious code with Netflix's insatiable hit, *Russian Doll*. The secret? Going deep.

Like the tiny figures hidden inside Russian nesting dolls, there is much more to writer, director, playwright, executive producer Leslye Headland and her work than meets the eye. By the same token, *Russian Doll* is more than another take on *Groundhog Day*, as some have compared it to. On the contrary, the never-ending loops of Nadia (played by co-creator, writer, director Natasha Lyonne) living and dying through her 36th birthday go ever deeper in each episode, as she tries to reprogram and heal her life up until that point.

That depth is due to the creative trifecta of Lyonne, Headland and former SNL member and executive producer Amy Poehler. *Russian Doll* arose from their collective desire to examine how people are “always overturning and going deeper into the ego and trying to figure out how the human brain works and how we make peace with certain things and why we repeat certain things.”

*Russian Doll* is a high-concept, multifaceted, female-protagonist show that, Headland says proudly, “doesn’t have to do with [the main character’s] job or her family or her love life” and uses game coding as a device to rewrite Nadia’s journey into her psyche. Headland partially credits the show’s success to Netflix’s binge model of dropping all eight episodes at once. She explains, “There wasn’t this pressure of that first episode having to make everyone stay in.”

Headland got her start, even *before* graduating from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts drama program, as a produced playwright with her Seven Deadly Plays series, the first of which became her feature film and directorial debut, *Bachelorette*. Even then, she chose to dive into her own past of a conservative and religious upbringing to see what she could unearth, each play focusing on a single sin.

*Bachelorette*’s sin was gluttony, and Headland recalls writing the line, “You guys had an abortion without me?” “I had that moment of, ‘I cannot say that. That’s not funny.’ And then I thought, ‘Oh, I have to say it.’ I think that was like a defining moment of whenever I had that moment of ‘no,’ it was like, ‘Oh, we should go deeper into this.’ Go into it and not run from it.

“The next thought that happened was, ‘Are you ready to answer for this?’ And I thought, ‘Yes, I am.’ Because it’s a good joke, you know, number one. And number two, it really did sum up thematically what the play was about, which was that wom-

Since 1921

# GIVE LIKE YOU CARE



**Because helping others could one day help you.**

MPTF provides a safety net of social and charitable support to the entertainment community. We provide financial assistance, referrals to community resources, and a host of other services. Learn more at [mptf.com](http://mptf.com).

Make a meaningful donation today at [mptf.com/donate](http://mptf.com/donate).

**MPTF**  
**WE ALL PLAY**  
**OUR PART**

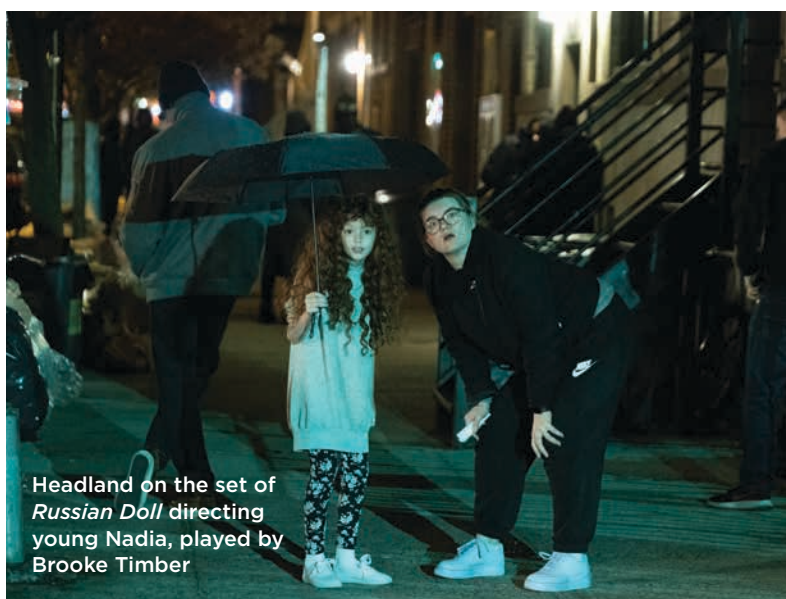


en were looking past their trauma and only seeing it through the lens of their own narcissism."

Such brave, truthful storytelling is what landed Headland her first writing job in television on a one-season-wonder show for FX about a pair of scrappy private detectives called *Terriers*. "It was literally a dream come true. But what was amazing was it was the first time that I'd ever had to write in someone else's voice, and it was the first nonfemale-centric project I'd ever been on," Headland says. And yet she remembers her major contribution to that show's sole season story line being to push for a main female character's depth.

"I thought, 'Katie has to do something wrong. Everything she does is just perfect.' To me, in that moment, I'm not thinking, 'I'm truth-telling.' It just seems to me that I can't relate with a character unless they do something wrong."

Finding and fleshing out flaws is also a major theme in *Russian Doll*. "One of the things that [Poehler] hit a lot on when we were pitching was the tiny doll inside. She said, 'Everybody has a tiny doll. What is Nadia's tiny doll? How do we externalize that? How do you make that into an understandable, consumable thing?' [Natasha's] literally telling a story that is—I don't think she'd mind me saying—pretty autobiographical. And so there's the triangle of her inner, smaller self dealing with her mother and then her being an



Headland on the set of *Russian Doll* directing young Nadia, played by Brooke Timber

"EVERYBODY HAS A TINY DOLL.  
WHAT IS NADIA'S TINY DOLL?  
HOW DO YOU MAKE THAT  
INTO AN UNDERSTANDABLE,  
CONSUMABLE THING?"

adult trying to deal with the ghost of both of those things."

Headland recalls of her own writing before *Russian Doll*, "I had been basically saying things about myself and my own psyche like 'this is my badness' or 'this is my addiction' or 'this is where I'm broken.' And the [therapist] that I worked with really turned it around to 'this is little Leslye.'"

"This is actually not a problem. This is little Leslye, who is not being given the sunlight, the creativity, the spirit. So when you do that type of work, it's awful and wonderful all at the same time. The idea that you could get that vulnerable, talk about it, put it up on the screen and people

would say, 'Me too,' is mind-blowing to me."

Her chances to share that vulnerability on a larger scale increased soon after *Terriers*. "It's worth mentioning that one of the show's creators, Shawn Ryan, said, 'Writers, you need to learn how to become producers. You need to be on set for your episodes so that you can learn how to produce your own work,'" notes Headland.

And indeed, her producing career was not far behind with *Bachelorette* and her second turn, the feature *Sleeping With Other People*. Directing and producing on the TV reboot of *Heathers* hit just before *Russian Doll* came about.

"An actual producer, in my opinion, is someone that is a liaison between the

project, the work and everybody else. It should flow that way. Not the other way around. I think sometimes what happens with producers—and I've been this person when I'm just producing—it's kind of like, 'Oh I guess I'm here just in case something happens ... I guess I'm here in case there's a problem and I'll take care of it.'"

The potential problems with *Russian Doll*'s production were immense given that the show was block-shot, cross-boarded and shot in chunks. For example, every scene where Nadia comes back to life in the bathroom at her birthday party was shot all at once. How did Headland solve the puzzle of tracking 22 different life/

death loops that filmed back-to-back?

"There are three things that I think contributed to how well that came off. The first one is that Natasha was in the writer's room the entire time. So you had a number one on the call sheet that really understood the nature of what the show was. She already knew what the overall journey was going to be.

"Another thing that contributed to it is that the other characters are always starting over. So [they] are always in the same feeling. They basically have to be in the moment and react right away to whatever it is that [Nadia's] doing.

"The third contribution was that we had the best script supervisor in the business, Melissa Yap-Stewart, who was incredible. I think it also just helps that I'm a video game player and I was also, again, writing in the writer's room but also directing half of the season. And we didn't have a very large writer's room and we didn't have eight different directors that directed the whole thing. It was good to have a smaller brain trust of people that were all the gatekeepers of the information."

Tackling *Russian Doll*'s insane continuity issue of consistently disappearing people and set pieces was solved with a big whiteboard and one big meeting of all the department heads simultaneously. "There were a couple of different diagrams. This particular diagram was just about what disappeared when and they were lettered. So for 'A through F, everything's the same. G through M, all these things disappear. And N through Q, people will start disappearing.' So on and so forth. So in a way, the block shooting of it helped because if you are shooting something on a corner and then the next time that happened was actually a couple episodes later, you would still have your background matching."

Headland, a self-proclaimed *Star Wars* nerd, says the layers of loops in Nadia's search for meaning and truth are no accident. She credits watching YouTube video essays in her youth for teaching her about Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey that plays out famously in the George Lucas films. Nadia too "has her refusals of the call; she has her mentor with Ruth," just like Luke Skywalker did.

Headland's other nerdy obsession is as "an artistic adrenaline junkie." She lives for the twist of "subverting expectations" where everyone dislikes a character and then suddenly it's like, "'Oh my God! I care so much about this character now.' I just love if they're surprised when they yell like that. Then it feels like I've got them; they're listening. While they're listening, let's shove the truth in their mouth. I'm addicted to that for sure.

"I'm addicted to engaging the audience to the point where they forget where they are for a second ... and then they'll come back,



and they'll remember their laundry. It's why the binge model is such a brilliant, brilliant, brilliant thing. If I could get them just kind of hypnotized by the show ... if I could just get them to keep pressing play, next episode, next episode. That immersion. I'm addicted to that immersion myself. Like when I watch the movies that I love or when I watch a new movie I've never seen before."

We can look forward to immersing ourselves in future Headland projects that include season 2 of *Russian Doll*, *Not Just Me*—a series she directed the pilot for—and an optioned dramatic feature she wrote and directed called *Tell Me Everything*. For now, she has these words of wisdom for fellow creators: "I think to be producing is getting as involved and as vulnerable as everybody else is. I think that's something that gets a little lost in the shuffle in the rise of the 'exec,' which is a person that sits and stays in an office all day. That's not hands-on. And I'm not saying that in a pejorative way. So what I've noticed in my very small amount of time on this earth is that there are producers that are on the ground, and [those who are] really invested and care just as much as you do and are solving problems." Lucky for us, Headland is one of those problem-solvers, going in deep with every project. ■





PHILIPPINES DOMINICAN  
REPUBLIC

© Dominican Republic Ministry of Tourism



25% Transferable Tax Credit  
Withholding Tax now reduced to 1.5% for foreign hire  
World Class Infrastructure & Production Services

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**  
**THE FILM DESTINATION**  
**YOU'VE BEEN DREAMING OF**  
[www.lantica.media](http://www.lantica.media) / +1.809.544.0062

**imagecraft**  
*full service production rentals*  
[www.imagecraftproductions.com](http://www.imagecraftproductions.com)

*Providing all your needs from*  
**Broadcast to Cinema**  
*and*  
**Single to Multi-camera**  
*Projects*

**818.954.0187**





## PGA INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE PANELS MAY 2019, CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

The International Committee had its strongest presence ever during the 72nd Cannes Film Festival in May with three extraordinary panels, thanks to the generosity of Royal Film Commission-Jordan and Film France. Moderated and created by IC Co-chair Kayvan Mashayekh, through his Producers Without Borders banner, the topics covered were Previsualization for Producers (featuring IC sponsor Pixomondo's Tefft Smith II), Metadata for Next Gen Producers: A Blockchain Application in the Entertainment Business (featuring PGA President Emeritus, Lori McCreary) and Deliver or Die, covering producers' struggles to preserve chain of title effectively for distribution throughout multiple international territories. The latter featured the first-ever PWB Women in Cannes panel including IC member Joyce Pierpoline, WIFT Germany Chair Nicole Ackermann, MGM Delivery Manager Lisa Farsadi, I-Mediate Clearance Executive Director Myriam Alembik of France and award-winning Jordanian Producer Rula Nasser.



Previsualization for Producers panel



Moderator Kayvan Mashayekh (with umbrella) next to Lori McCreary, PGA President Emeritus

PHOTOGRAPHED BY DANIELLE CAMPBELL

## WOMEN IN PRODUCTION SUMMIT JUNE 22 ATLANTA

This year's 4th annual Women in Production Summit was the most comprehensive to date. The five organizing groups (PGA WIN ATL, WIFTA, Black Women Film Network, Film Fatales ATL and the Alliance of Women Directors ATL) hosted speakers and panels on work-life balance, women in the unions, advice on partnerships and other related topics. The event was hosted by Georgia Public Broadcasting and was completely sold out, with 325 people attending.



Kit Vinsick and Deborah Riley  
Draper of Film Fatales





## PRODUCING INDIE FEATURES JUNE 1, NEW YORK CITY

PGA members gathered at the SVA SocDoc theater for Producing Indie Features: A PGA members-only summit on Creative Producing, covering the various stages of production from concept through a project's release. Industry experts across the NYC entertainment community shared their expertise and networked with participants. The standing-room-only event was a collaboration between organizers from the PGA East Education Committee (Janet Grillo, Thea Kerman) and Women's Impact Network (Donna Gigliotti, Linda Evans, Julie Goldstein).

The summit kicked off with the Development panel. Led by moderator Donna Gigliotti, panelists covered what they look for in source material, the benefits of shopping agreements and how to pitch a project. Next, Packaging experts and moderator Adam Pincus examined the best ways to align cash, cast and producer.

Following a lunch, Anne Hubbel led the Financing discussion centered around setting up LLCs and S-Corps, revenue waterfalls and accessing tax incentives. The Marketing and Distribution panel with moderator Marian Koltai-Levine rounded out the day, covering strategies to work with lenders, festivals and distributors to get a film in front of its ideal audience.

The inspiring event was taped, and segments from the program will be made available on the PGA website.



Development Panel: Donna Gigliotti, Marcy Drogin, Holly Frederick, Vicki Cherkas, Julie Goldstein



Marketing and Distribution Panel: Kent Sanderson, Janet Brown, John Sloss, Marian Koltai-Levine



Packaging Panel: Adam Pincus, Josh Astrachan, Laura Rosenthal, Ken Lee



Financing Panel: Anne Hubbell, David Oliver, Thea Kerman, Shrihari Sathe

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KATE BONFIAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY RONI POLSGROVE







# INSTANT

# GRATIFICATION

**JAKE AVNET IS ONLY  
ASKING FOR A MINUTE  
OF YOUR TIME**

WRITTEN BY SPIKE FRIEDMAN

**J**ake Avnet of Indigenous Media is a savvy digital producer; his work is defined by bringing a cinematic quality to online shareable content. He's also a canny businessman, responsible for some of the most innovative brand integrations for filmed content on the web. But what comes across right away from meeting him is his passion for telling stories about interesting people. Sure he's excited to talk about his history creating digital content and the business of *60 Second Docs*, the online series he produces that has led to partnerships across a range of industries. But what he really wants to tell me about are the Weed Nuns.

“

**WEED****NUNS?**

”

I ask. “Weed Nuns,” Avnet replies. The Weed Nuns are a group of women in the Central Valley of California who proselytize the use of marijuana and create medicinal products for terminal cancer patients. These are passionate businesswomen focused on helping people. And with *60 Second Docs*, you can learn their story in, well, just about a minute. Although other videos produced under the *60 Second Docs* banner have more hits, the Weed Nuns documentary perfectly encapsulates the series’ ideal. It looks great, it tells a true story that has a couple of twists, and it is as digestible as it is thought-provoking. “Each one is a different story,” says Avnet. “It’s different characters, it’s a different journey. Hopefully people find joy in that.”

This instinct toward telling joyful stories about quirky individuals has allowed *60 Second Docs* to become a thriving business with a range of brand partnerships. And each of these partnerships is rooted in real human stories. “We’re outsiders, we’re storytellers,” says Avnet, “and that’s basically our biggest asset.” Partners have ranged from Mike’s Hard Lemonade to the investment firm BlackRock. And because *60 Second Docs* tell stories of interesting people, they have been able to work with GoFundMe to create a new synergistic home for their content. *60 Second Docs* finds the most fascinating stories on the crowdfunding platform and tells those stories with a cinematic

eye that the typical fundraiser would never have the capacity to produce. This shines a light on people in need and turns a brand integration into a way of doing good. “We’re people-oriented,” explains Avnet, “in terms of us thinking about how we can give back. This felt like it was an amazingly direct way of doing that.”

Other engagements, including a promotional push alongside the release of *BlackKkKlansman*, appear more traditional but still leverage the unique approach of *60 Second Docs*. With *BlackKkKlansman*, they produced a short documentary that told the real history behind the film, centering it on Ron Stallworth, upon whom the film’s story was based. By blending interview footage, archival footage and footage from the movie, *60 Second Docs* produced content that both promoted the film and led to a more profound level of audience engagement. The combination of archival footage and scenes from the Spike Lee film worked in concert to tell a compelling story and deepen the stakes of the movie for the viewer. And it did that in just over a minute, generating hundreds of thousands of views across a range of platforms.

Because *60 Second Docs* is by its very nature “snackable” content, it is able to live in multiple areas, which means the material Avnet produces is platform-agnostic. Making films that are optimized for online consumption can mean chasing views via the algorithms of behemoth platforms like Google and Facebook.

That’s not the approach Avnet takes.

“You see a lot of publishers play this game where they kind of are like, OK, Facebook loves VR? We’re a VR company now,” says Avnet. “We try to stay out of that fray.” For *60 Second Docs*, that means eschewing the norms of the shareable Facebook video.

Avnet’s cinematic instincts pushed him to produce more sophisticated material, going beyond user-generated content to engage up-and-coming filmmakers interested in telling new stories. “We went the opposite direction,” says Avnet. “We’re making films. They’re really short, but they are films. They hopefully have a bit of a cinematic eye. They’re a little more premium, and we think that will drive deeper engagement.”

Although the *60 Second Docs* model does not require a lowest-common-denominator approach to chasing clicks, Avnet still uses digital platforms to optimize the product being created. And because *60 Second Docs* are by their nature very short, Avnet and his team can test multiple cuts of a documentary with the public to see which people find more engaging. “It’s a rapid-fire focus testing process,” Avnet explains. This can happen very quickly because the content is being consumed very quickly. The team can infer which cut of a documentary the public prefers and then push a preferred option out across a range of platforms.

This instinct toward using the online space to create premium content comes naturally to Avnet. He grew up in the industry. His father, Jon, is a director and producer and is the co-CEO at Indigenous. But Jake also came out of film school during the early era of digital production. He learned how to produce quickly, on a budget, and across a wide range of forms including web series, music videos and advertisements. As studios became interested in moving into digital, Avnet had both the chops in the space and the cinematic eye needed to thrive. “The world grew up around us,” Avnet says of his experience in the industry.

This led to a partnership with YouTube



under their Original Channels Initiative called WIGS, spearheaded by Rodrigo Garcia, now co-CEO of Indigenous Media. WIGS operated like both studio and network—developing, producing and distributing new premium content, including *Blue* starring Julia Stiles and Eric Stoltz. “That was a really, really cool experience where it just became this crash course in all aspects of producing,” says Avnet.

Understanding digital means understanding the specifics of what makes certain content work on certain platforms. That is fundamental to the work Indigenous produces; their name is a play on the idea of being native to a medium. And no project is more indicative of Avnet’s understanding of the digital space than their release of *Sickhouse* on Snapchat. This found-footage horror film was designed to blur the lines between fiction and reality. “If you’re making a movie for Snapchat,” says Avnet, “you need to make it in a way that people want to watch it on Snapchat.” *Sickhouse*, though, is not just a Snapchat-native horror film. It is a well-made horror film that happens to conform to the

norms of Snapchat.

With *60 Second Docs*, this push toward short and high-quality content reaches its apex. But that doesn’t mean the project does not have room to grow. *60 Second Docs* is already a global enterprise, having produced shorts on every continent on the planet. However, the team is currently cutting deals to expand its reach. That means more than simply exporting what has already worked in the United States. It means adapting the work to appeal to different cultures. “It’s important to be thoughtful about what stories you are telling,” says Avnet of the challenge of balancing translating content that has worked well in the domestic market, versus expanding by producing content that is market-specific.

Growing the scope of *60 Second Docs* also means looking at ways of expanding the content to leverage what it is already doing well, while finding new ways to dig deeper into these stories. This has led Avnet and Indigenous to partner with Howie Mandel’s Alevy Productions on a television version of *60 Second Docs*. The show will allow viewers to go deeper into these stories via interviews and features.

Of the project and working with Avnet, Mandel says, “I came to *60 Seconds Docs* as a fan because I loved their content. [Jake’s] approach makes the evolution into traditional film and TV very clear and we see unlimited potential.”

Avnet’s push into this new space between traditional and digital media also includes *Five Points* on Facebook Watch. *Five Points* is a teen drama with a focus on social issues. Co-produced with Kerry Washington, the show places high-end content on a nontraditional platform to reach an audience that is increasingly eschewing traditional platforms. “Tasked with finding a way to combine the best of digital and traditional filmmaking to bring premium storytelling to an emerging platform,” says Washington, “I cannot think of a collaborator who would have brought a more thoughtful, resilient, innovative and visionary approach than Jake.”

This is a natural expansion for Avnet, because at the end of the day, he is interested in producing stories about fascinating people. And if a move to a more traditional medium means we get more than a minute with the Weed Nuns, it feels like that’s a win-win. ■



60 Second Docs teams with Mike's Hard Lemonade for a LA Pride parade float and Proud Dad campaign

“YOU SEE A LOT OF PUBLISHERS PLAY THIS GAME WHERE THEY KIND OF ARE LIKE, OK, FACEBOOK LOVES VR? WE’RE A VR COMPANY NOW.”

# EXPAND YOUR AUDIENCE



Ali Stroker makes history, winning Tony Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Musical for her role in *Oklahoma*.



Micah Fowler and Diego Luna attend the premiere of *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*.



The cast of *Born This Way*



Daryl "Chill" Mitchell and Anthony Anderson at the 41st NAACP Image Awards





## HOW TO REACH, CONNECT WITH AND SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

WRITTEN BY LAUREN APPELBAUM

**S**ome of the most talented people in history—from Beethoven (deaf) and Harriet Tubman (epilepsy) to Selena Gomez (lupus), Richard Branson (dyslexic) and Steven Hawking (ALS)—achieved great success while living with a disability. Despite the fact that today 56 million Americans have a disability, few industries are fully reaching out to this market. The film and TV industry has a unique opportunity to change that narrative. Here are a few tips, ideas and facts to help you get started, courtesy of a proactive organization called RespectAbility, the nonprofit that produced The Hollywood Disability Inclusion Toolkit.

show *NCIS: New Orleans* features a character in a wheelchair, portrayed by Daryl “Chill” Mitchell, an African American actor who was paralyzed in a motorcycle accident and uses a wheelchair off screen. This is an important representation for a large portion of the viewing audience, as people with disabilities make up the third-largest market, per Nielsen. Recently Ali Stroker made history as the first actor who uses a wheelchair to win a Tony award. Stroker also identifies as LGBTQ. Additionally, producers should think about the diversity of disabilities. That includes those who are deaf or blind, have a cognitive disability such as Down syndrome, or an invisible disability such as dyslexia or depression.

---

ACTORS WITHOUT DISABILITIES PLAY  
MORE THAN 95% OF CHARACTERS  
WITH DISABILITIES ON TELEVISION.

---

### **DISABILITIES ARE RARELY SEEN IN MOVIES OR TELEVISION SHOWS.**

By simply showing more characters with disabilities, you can bring disability out of the closet and into the open. This will help people with disabilities and those who love them feel more accepted, valued, respected and appreciated.

### **DISABILITY CUTS ACROSS EVERY DEMOGRAPHIC, GENDER, AGE, RACE AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION.**

Too often, people with disabilities are represented by white actors. Producers can help ensure that people of color also are included. The

### **PORTRAY CHARACTERS WITH DISABILITIES AS SUCCESSFUL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.**

Like people in the LGBTQ community, people with disabilities should be able to be “out” in the open and accepted as equals. The reality show *Born This Way* features seven diverse young adults with Down syndrome as they move toward full independence and deal with issues around employment, independent living, education and romance. By promoting success stories of people with disabilities, *Born This Way* helps to change negative perceptions. The show has been well received, winning

three Emmy Awards. In scripted television, *Speechless* is a sitcom centered on a family that happens to include a son with cerebral palsy. The fact that the character J.J. is played by Micah Fowler, an actor who has cerebral palsy, is extremely important. Actors without disabilities play more than 95% of characters with disabilities on television.

### **ALLOW CHARACTERS WITH DISABILITIES TO SHOWCASE THEIR SKILLS IN A VARIETY OF ROLES.**

Why not show doctors and teachers of all racial and ethnic backgrounds who use a wheelchair or a prosthesis? Show a store clerk, hospital aid, or food service worker who has Down syndrome or a hero who is dyslexic or blind and uses speech-to-text to type and audio text-to-read. Today people with disabilities are shown either as X-Men with strange super skills or as less productive members of society. But most people with disabilities are neither. What they do have, however, is natural and refined abilities to innovate, as they must constantly find work-arounds to succeed in life.

### **THINK ABOUT THE LANGUAGE THAT YOU USE.**

Avoid terms like “wheelchair-bound” and “suffers from.” The National Center on Disability and Journalism (NCDJ) provides the industry’s only disability language style guide. The guide is intended for journalists, communication professionals and members of the general public who are seeking the appropriate and accurate language to use when writing or talking about people living with disabilities. The guide covers general terms and words on physical disabilities, hearing and visual impairments, mental and cognitive disabilities, and seizure disorders. It’s available to view at [ncdj.org/style-guide](http://ncdj.org/style-guide).

### **USE YOUR SHOWS AND MOVIES TO INSPIRE PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

### **TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT EARLY INTERVENTION CAN BRING.**

Being a successful parent of any child is hard work. Parenting a child with disabilities can be even harder, and there is a clock ticking. Recent breakthroughs in neuroscience have proven that children’s brains are “neuroplastic,” especially in the first six years of life. This means that with proper, early intervention, children’s brains can literally be rewired. The film *Finding Dory* presents a realistic portrayal of what it is like to parent a child with disabilities. The first scene shows Dory’s parents teaching her how to interact with other children in the aquarium through role-playing. Throughout the film, the scaffolding they built for Dory as a child pays off, enabling her to find them again. Such modeling in future TV shows and films can be transformative for children and parents alike. You can inspire parents, teachers and other caregivers to help children build skills and resiliency that lead to success.

### **REACH OUT TO EXPERTS.**

As a member of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, which represents more than 100 national disability organizations, RespectAbility can set you up with experts on a wide variety of disabilities. They are ready to be your partner in ensuring accurate coverage and can help you prepare tool kits and teaching guides on disability-related topics that connect to your shows.

### **ENSURE THAT PEOPLE WITH A VARIETY OF DISABILITIES HAVE ACCESS TO YOUR PRODUCTS.**

Make your website fully accessible by having both captions and audio descriptions available for those who have either visual or auditory disabilities. These people are consumers of content and watch TV and film. For your website, add tags, captions, a site index, and alt text to images. Ensure that all videos have captions and check their accuracy.

Video hosting sites such as YouTube and Vimeo have free tools that allow users to add automated subtitles to their clips—but review these carefully for reliability. Making a transcript of the video available online is also an incredibly helpful resource for users with auditory disabilities like deafness, or for those who are hard of hearing. Many of these things are also valuable for your search engine optimization (SEO), increasing your reach and readership.

### **CREATE A PLAN TO HIRE AND RETAIN EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES.**

Check out places like Exceptional Minds, which trains students with autism in creating graphics for films and TV shows. The nonprofit USBLN, the National Organization on Disability, and ASKJAN.org are also great resources. Create an employee resource group for employees with disabilities. How many employees with disabilities or people who have family members with disabilities does your company employ? Do they feel comfortable bringing their authentic 360-degree selves to work? Do they have a support system with other members of the team? Ensure that people who identify as a woman, African American or LGBTQ and *also* have a disability are welcomed into every aspect of your organization. People who live with multiple minority status should be able to feel comfortable and welcome in all groups. ■

For more information see *The Hollywood Disability Inclusion Toolkit* at [www.respectability.org/hollywood-inclusion](http://www.respectability.org/hollywood-inclusion)

*Lauren Appelbaum is the Vice President of Communications of RespectAbility, a nonprofit organization fighting stigmas and advancing opportunities for and with people with disabilities.*





**Airline Cabin Rentals**

**Skyway Stage & Terminal Set**

**Production Base Camp**

- Located within the Studio Zone
- Production Suite
- Makeup & Wardrobe Rooms
- Ample Production Parking
- MacTech LED Lighting Rentals
- Complimentary Chairs, Tables & Canopies



VISIT US AT [AEROMOCKUPS.COM](http://AEROMOCKUPS.COM)  
CALL (888) MOCK-UPS (662-5877)



**THE BEST ENTERTAINMENT COVERAGE  
FOR AWARDS SEASON AND ALL YEAR!**



**SAM RUBIN &  
JESSICA HOLMES**



**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S  
#1 MORNING NEWS**



# GREATER VISIBILITY AND A LOUDER VOICE

## THE PGA EAST PRESENTS A SPECIAL SALON TO SUPPORT DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS

The PGA Documentary Screening Salon is a unique program that allows smaller documentaries to reach a wider audience. The monthly curated screenings regularly draw enthusiastic crowds and spur lively discussions with a Q&A and reception afterward. The films chosen can be docs that have a limited distributor, are self-distributed or without distribution at all.

Jill Campbell and Joseph Schroeder lead the Documentary Screening Salon subcommittee, which is part of the PGA East Documentary and Nonfiction Committee. The subcommittee's members are experienced documentarians, whose mission is to identify quality filmmakers and shine a spotlight on their work, while at the same time providing an exclusive viewing experience for PGA members.

Each of the past four seasons, the Salon has screened several highly acclaimed independent documentaries, including *The Wolfpack*, *Minding the Gap*, *Quest* and *Life, Animated*. This past year featured *The River and the Wall*, *Roll Red Roll* and *This Changes Everything*. The final screening of 2019 will be for *The Hottest August*, taking place on August 21. The annual program, which begins in March, is open to all 1,800 members of the Guild's East region.

When she's not co-chairing the Documentary Screening Salon, Jill is a director and producer of independent documentaries, most recently *Mr. Chibbs*. She finds it very rewarding to be in a position to help filmmakers get more visibility for their projects and introduce her fellow PGA members to docs that might not be on their radar. "It has been wonderful to meet and support other documentary producers in an intimate setting. For anyone involved in documentary filmmaking, this is a great chance to network," she says.

Joseph also produces documentaries, most notably, *Beyond Borders: Undocumented Mexican Americans* for PBS. He adds, "The Salon atmosphere truly opens up a venue for communication about the issues raised in a particular film in a way other events may not. It's great to partner with Jill to create an environment where filmmakers feel free to share their work, and Guild members feel free to connect with it on a personal level."

The two volunteers put in a lot of time and effort finding the projects they want to screen at the Salon. This includes attending festivals, reading trade publications and reviews, and gathering suggestions from fellow PGA members. It has proved to be a winning formula for both the Guild and the work of these independent documentarians. ■



JILL CAMPBELL



JOSEPH SCHROEDER

## MARKING TIME

The Producers Guild proudly salutes the following whose credits have been certified with the Producers Mark. This list includes films released in June and July.

*Certification via the Producers Mark indicates that a producer undertook a major portion of the producing duties on the motion picture.*



### AMERICAN WOMAN

Ridley Scott, p.g.a.  
Kevin J. Walsh, p.g.a.  
Michael Pruss, p.g.a.

### ANNABELLE COMES HOME

Peter Safran, p.g.a.  
James Wan, p.g.a.

### BETHANY HAMILTON: UNSTOPPABLE

Penny Edmiston, p.g.a.  
Jane Kelly Kosek, p.g.a.  
Aaron Lieber, p.g.a.

### CHILD'S PLAY

David Katzenberg, p.g.a.  
Seth Grahame-Smith, p.g.a.

### CRAWL

Sam Raimi, p.g.a.  
Alexandre Aja, p.g.a.  
Craig Flores, p.g.a.

### DARK PHOENIX

Simon Kinberg, p.g.a.  
Hutch Parker, p.g.a.

### DAVID CROSBY: REMEMBER MY NAME

Cameron Crowe, p.g.a.  
Michele Farinola, p.g.a.  
Greg Mariotti, p.g.a.

### THE FAREWELL

Daniele Melia, p.g.a.  
Marc Turtletaub, p.g.a.  
& Peter Saraf, p.g.a.  
Andrew Miano, p.g.a.  
& Chris Weitz, p.g.a.  
Lulu Wang, p.g.a.

### FAST & FURIOUS PRESENTS: HOBBS & SHAW

Dwayne Johnson, p.g.a.  
Chris Morgan, p.g.a.  
Hiram Garcia, p.g.a.

### THE LAST BLACK MAN IN SAN FRANCISCO

Christina Oh, p.g.a.  
Khariah Neal, p.g.a.  
Joe Talbot, p.g.a.

### LATE NIGHT

Mindy Kaling, p.g.a.  
Howard Klein, p.g.a.  
Jillian Apfelbaum, p.g.a.  
Ben Browning, p.g.a.

### THE LION KING

Jon Favreau, p.g.a.  
Jeffrey Silver, p.g.a.  
Karen Gilchrist, p.g.a.

### LUCE

John Baker, p.g.a.  
Julius Onah, p.g.a.

### MEN IN BLACK: INTERNATIONAL

Walter F. Parkes, p.g.a.  
Laurie MacDonald, p.g.a.

### MIDSOMMAR

Lars Knudsen, p.g.a.

### MIKE WALLACE IS HERE

Rafael Marmor, p.g.a.  
Avi Belkin, p.g.a.

### THE NIGHTINGALE

Kristina Ceyton, p.g.a.  
Bruna Papandrea, p.g.a.  
Steve Hutensky, p.g.a.  
Jennifer Kent, p.g.a.

### THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS 2

Janet Healy, p.g.a.  
Chris Meledandri, p.g.a.

### SHAFT

John Davis, p.g.a.

### SPIDER-MAN: FAR FROM HOME

Kevin Feige, p.g.a.  
Amy Pascal, p.g.a.

### STUBER

Jonathan Goldstein, p.g.a.  
John Francis Daley, p.g.a.

### SWORD OF TRUST

Ted Speaker, p.g.a.  
Lynn Shelton, p.g.a.

### THEM THAT FOLLOW

Bradley Gallo, p.g.a.  
Michael Helfant, p.g.a.  
Danielle Robinson, p.g.a.

### TOY STORY 4

Mark Nielsen, p.g.a.  
Jonas Rivera, p.g.a.

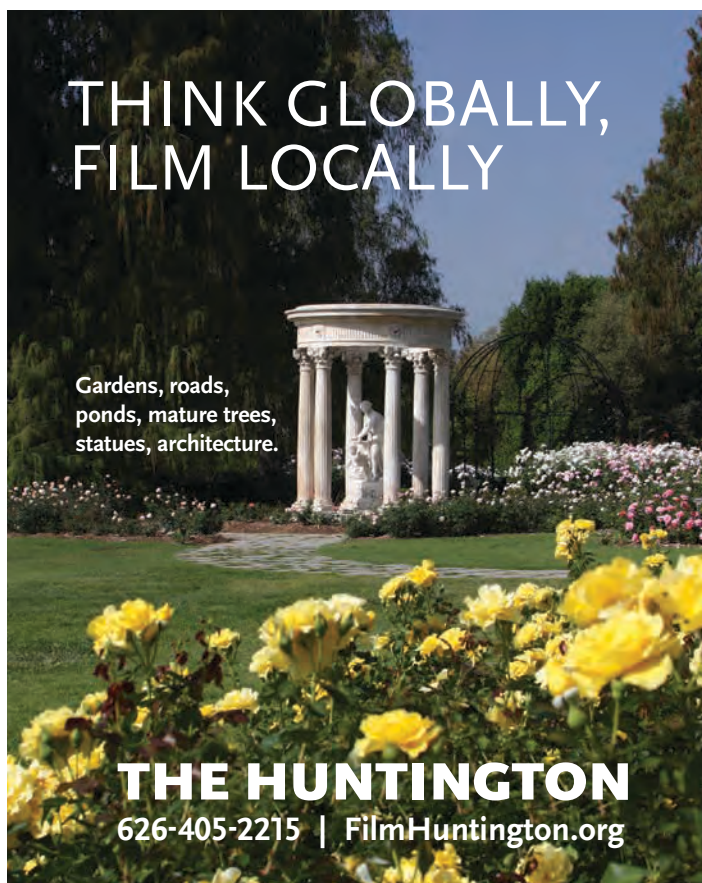
### VAULT

Chad A. Verdi, p.g.a.  
Nick Koskoff, p.g.a.  
Michelle Verdi, p.g.a.



# MEMBER BENEFITS

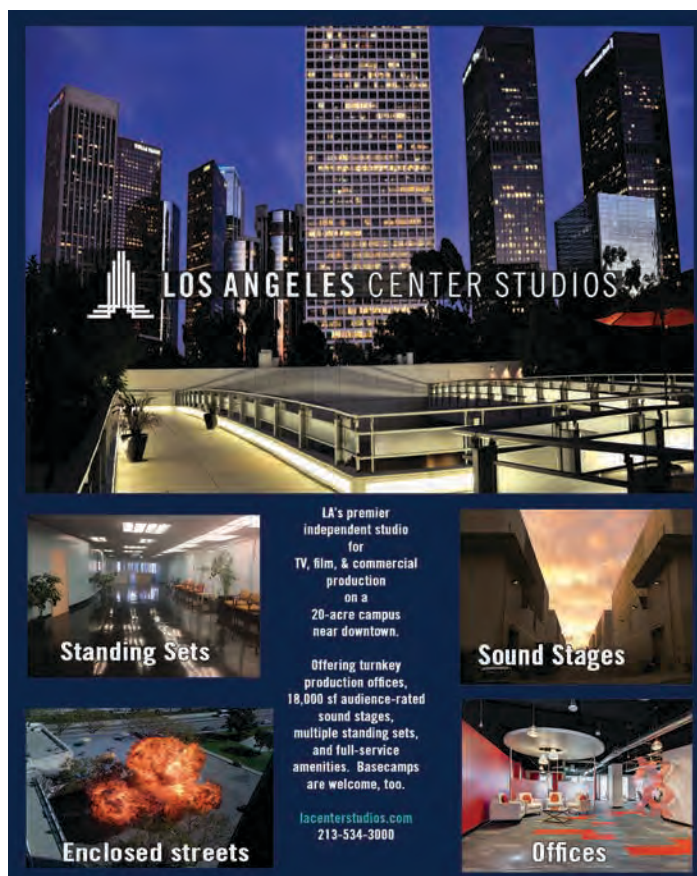
- Discounted registration for **Produced By Conference** and **Produced By: New York**.
- **Vote on Producers Guild Awards** and receive discount tickets to the event, as well as DVD screeners for awards consideration.
- Access to CSATTF online **safety training videos**.
- Admission to special PGA **pre-release screenings and Q&A events**.
- **Full access to PGA website** including events, calendar, social networking tools, members-only video library.
- **Access to PGA Job Board**, online resume search, employment tools and job forums.
- Eligibility for **PGA Mentoring Program**.
- Listing of contact and credit information in searchable **online roster**.
- **Arbitration** of credit disputes.
- **Participation** in the Motion Picture Industry Health, Welfare & Pension Plan.
- Free attendance at **PGA seminars**.
- Wide variety of **discounts** on events, merchandise, travel.
- Complimentary subscription to **Produced By**.



THINK GLOBALLY,  
FILM LOCALLY

Gardens, roads,  
ponds, mature trees,  
statues, architecture.

**THE HUNTINGTON**  
626-405-2215 | FilmHuntington.org



LA's premier independent studio for TV, film, & commercial production on a 20-acre campus near downtown.

Offering turnkey production offices, 18,000 sf audience-rated sound stages, multiple standing sets, and full-service amenities. Basecamps are welcome, too.

lacenterstudios.com  
213-534-3000

**Standing Sets**

**Enclosed streets**

**Sound Stages**

**Offices**

# NEW MEMBERS

The Producers Guild is proud to welcome the following new members, who joined the Guild in May and June 2019.



1

## PRODUCERS COUNCIL

Prem Akkaraju  
 Rick Alvarez  
 Fenton Bailey  
 Randy Barbato  
 Sara Bernstein  
 Raquel Bruno  
 Jessica de Rothschild  
 Lynsey Dufour  
 Charles Eckert  
 Lisa Erspamer  
 Alexa Faigen  
 Angie Fielder  
 Katterli Frauenfelder  
 Kourtney Gleason  
 Jessica Harrop  
 April Hart  
 Nicole Holland  
 David Hopwood  
 Lucas Jarach  
 Euros Jones-Evans  
 Judi Levine  
 Iain MacDonald  
 Trevor Macy  
 Roberto Malerba  
 John Mass  
 Kelly May  
 Michelle Nelson  
 Mark O'Connor  
 Kjetil Omberg

Shannon Phillips  
 Chris Pollack  
 Eric Rhone  
 Keith Rodger  
 Trevor Roth  
 Allyson Seeger  
 Brittney Segal  
 Atit Shah  
 Hollann Sobers  
 Shelly Sumpter Gillyard  
 Mary Rae Thewlis  
 Eddie Vaisman  
 Nick Vallelonga  
 Derek Van Pelt  
 Happy Walters  
 Marci Wiseman  
 Bryan Zuriff

Gavin Garrison  
 Alexa Ginsburg  
 Greg Griffin  
 Bailey Grizzle  
 Chris Jackson <sup>1</sup>  
 Mary Ann Jones  
 Julianne Klein  
 Klee Knoy <sup>2</sup>  
 Daniela Mazzucato  
 Justin Nix  
 Cooper Peltz  
 Audrey Rabine  
 Rachel Stern  
 Ali Sultani <sup>3</sup>  
 Thomas Ward



2



3



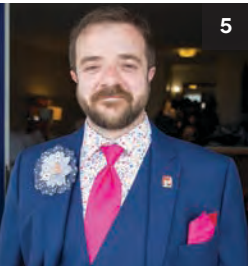
4

## AP COUNCIL

Rachel Allen  
 Katy Baker Petrella  
 Clément Bauer  
 Elise Belknap  
 Joseph Buscemi  
 Maleah Butcher  
 Everlyn Chen  
 Andre Coutu  
 Grace Delia  
 Bryan Dimas  
 Louis Ferrara

## NEW MEDIA COUNCIL

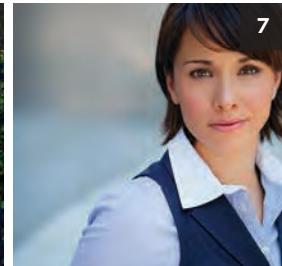
Shelley Andagan <sup>4</sup>  
 Jeremy Hughes  
 Paul Pianezza <sup>5</sup>  
 David Tochtermann <sup>6</sup>  
 Anna Zielinski <sup>7</sup>



5



6



7



# PGA HEALTH: WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

"I WORK  
ON A WEST  
COAST IATSE  
PRODUCTION."

## Motion Picture Industry Plan

### Available to:

Producers/Produced By,  
Executive Producers, Associate  
Producers, Post-Production  
Supervisors

### Who:

- Work for an AMPTP signatory
- Work on theatrical motion pictures, prime-time network series, prime-time, first-run syndicated series
- Utilize a West Coast IA Crew
- Are credited with 600 hours of work over the past six months. (Assume a 60-hour work week.)

Once qualified, participants must be credited with 400 hours of work in the subsequent six-month period to extend coverage.

### CONTACT:

Your payroll or labor relations department.

"I RUN A  
SMALL  
COMPANY."

## Open Health MEWA Plan

### Available to:

Employers and employees of small production companies

### Who:

- Work at a company with a minimum of three employees. Company owner may count as an employee if s/he draws a salary from the company.

### CONTACT:

(866) 491-4001

Request information about MEWA (Multiple Employer Welfare Association) plans.

"I AM AN  
INDIVIDUAL  
LOOKING FOR THE  
BEST COVERAGE I  
CAN AFFORD."

## The Actor's Fund

### Available to:

All professionals who work in the entertainment industry

The Actor's Fund is the official organization representing the Affordable Care Act to the entertainment industry.

### CONTACT:

(800) 221-7303 (New York)  
(888) 825-0911 (Los Angeles)

Request a consultation to discuss individual plans available on the open market.

# FAQ: THE PRODUCERS MARK

## THOSE THREE LITTLE LETTERS HAVE A LOT BACKING THEM UP

### WHEN I SEE P.G.A. AFTER A PRODUCER'S NAME IN A MOVIE'S CREDITS, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

It means that according to the rules of the Producers Guild's certification process, that producer performed a major portion of the producing functions on that particular motion picture.

### DOES THE P.G.A. AFTER THE PRODUCER'S NAME MEAN THAT THE PRODUCER IS A MEMBER OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD?

No. A producer does not need to be a member of the PGA to receive the "p.g.a." designation after their name. In many cases, the sets of initials you see in movie credits (such as A.S.C. and A.C.E.) indicate membership in an organization. The Producers Mark is different. It's a certification mark; its purpose is to designate that the producer has met an officially recognized standard of performance on that film.

### IF A PRODUCER DOESN'T RECEIVE THE P.G.A. MARK FROM THE PRODUCERS GUILD, WHAT HAPPENS TO THEIR PRODUCING CREDIT?

Nothing. The Producers Mark doesn't control or affect the "Produced By" credit in any way, nor does it invalidate that credit by its absence.

### WHAT IMPACT DOES THE P.G.A. MARK HAVE ON AWARDS?

Determinations for the Producers Mark and for producer award eligibility are determined at the same time and via the

same process. In addition to the PGA, AMPAS, HFPA and BAFTA all rely on the PGA process to guide their decision-making. However the final selection of nominees is always at the discretion of the organization giving the award. Overwhelmingly, these organizations concur with the PGA determinations, but occasionally, the decisions diverge.

### WHAT'S THE PROCESS?

The process is initiated by the copyright owner of the film. After the post-production process has commenced, but four to six weeks before credits are locked, the owner submits a film for consideration via [ProducersGuildAwards.com](http://ProducersGuildAwards.com).

Within two to three weeks, the PGA sends out eligibility forms to every producer credited as "Produced By" or "Producer" on the film and sends confidential verification forms to a wide variety of third parties associated with the production of the film: the director(s), writer(s), department heads, company executives and key crew members.

Once forms have been returned, the PGA convenes a panel of arbiters, each of them active and experienced producers with numerous (and recent) credits, typically in the genre or category of the film under consideration. (I.e., if the film is a major studio tentpole, we try to utilize arbiters with considerable experience in making those big-budget studio pictures. If the film is a smaller indie movie, we rely on producers familiar with that type of production, etc.) An initial arbitration panel typically has three arbiters.

The arbiters review all materials

returned to the PGA by the producers and third parties, with all names of individuals credited on the film redacted, so that arbiters can arrive at a judgment based on the testimony provided rather than the name recognition and perceived reputation of the producers.

Following the determination, the PGA staff informs the producers of the decision.

Producers who object to the decision have five days to notify the Guild of an intent to appeal. After giving producers the opportunity to add to or clarify their testimony, the PGA will convene a new panel of arbiters. All appellate panels consist of three producers. If the initial decision was unanimous, the appellate panel will consist of one producer from the original panel and two new producers; if the initial decision was not unanimous, the appellate panel will consist of three new producers. The decision of the appellate panel is final.

### SO WHEN ARBITERS ARE LOOKING AT THESE FORMS, WHAT ARE THEY SEEING?

The eligibility form filled out by producers asks them to indicate their level of responsibility for a variety of producing functions spanning development, pre-production, physical production and post-production. The form also includes a free-response section for the producer to more fully elaborate on the specifics of the production and their role on the film. The verification forms filled out by third parties typically ask the respondent questions related to the nature of their collaboration with the credited producers.



(For instance, the verification form for editors asks the editor to designate which producer(s) consulted with the editor regarding dailies, gave notes on cuts or participated in screenings.)

### WHO SELECTS WHICH ARBITERS VET THE CREDITS OF WHICH MOTION PICTURES?

That determination is made by the PGA's Associate General Counsel in consultation with the National Executive Director/COO.

### WHAT IF THE PGA SELECTS AN ARBITER WHO (UNBEKNOWNST TO THEM) IS BIASED AGAINST A GIVEN PRODUCER OR FILM?

The Guild takes proactive measures to prevent that from happening. Prior to convening the panel, the PGA provides all producers with a list of potential arbiters. Producers are free to strike any arbiter for any reason. Such arbiters will not be empaneled for that particular film. Furthermore, all arbiters are asked to affirmatively state that they have no interests in the films to be arbitrated that might result in a biased judgment. Even if all of those hurdles are cleared, an arbiter will be removed from the process if they or the PGA administrator feels that bias is affecting their judgment.

### WHY CAN'T THE PGA BE MORE TRANSPARENT ABOUT THE PROCESS?

We maintain the strictest confidentiality around the identities of the producers, third parties and arbiters involved because such confidence is the only

p.g.a.

way we can hope to get accurate and truthful information. Many producers are powerful figures in this industry and this might put pressure on third parties and arbiters to achieve a desired decision. Keeping those identities confidential is the only way to maintain the integrity of the process.

### ONCE A PRODUCER'S CREDIT IS CERTIFIED WITH THE P.G.A. MARK, IS THAT CERTIFICATION APPLIED PERMANENTLY TO ALL OF THE PRODUCER'S FILMS?

No. A Producers Mark appended to a producing credit applies to that film only. It represents the nature of the work performed on that film alone and does not "carry over" to future productions.

### WHY DO SOME FILMS CARRY THE P.G.A. MARK, BUT NOT OTHERS?

The Producers Mark is voluntary. Each of the major studios—Universal, Disney, Warner Bros., Sony, Paramount and Fox—has signed a contractual agreement to submit their films to the Guild for credit certification, as have Lionsgate, DreamWorks and DreamWorks Animation, Lucasfilm, Marvel, MGM, New Line and Pixar. If an independently owned film elects not to participate, we can't

force them to submit for certification.

The Producers Mark also is recognized by the WGA, DGA and SAG-AFTRA. The PGA has agreed not to license the Producers Mark for use with any combined credit (e.g., "Directed and Produced By ...")

### WHO DOES THE PRODUCERS GUILD REPRESENT?

The PGA is composed of over 8,200 professionals working in motion pictures, television and digital media throughout the United States and around the world.

### HOW IS THE PGA DIFFERENT FROM ITS FELLOW GUILDS?

Unlike the DGA, WGA and SAG-AFTRA, the PGA is not a labor union. This means that we can't go on strike, set wage minimums, or negotiate collective bargaining agreements on behalf of our membership. As we are now the largest professional trade organization in the entertainment industry, the PGA provides numerous benefits for its members, including educational and training events, employment opportunities, social and networking functions, and a collective voice that represents and protects the varied interests of producers and their teams, including the Producers Mark. ■

# AS GOOD AS IT GETS



It's hard to know what was shining brightest on this August 2017 day—the sun following a solar eclipse or these four megastars eagerly viewing and clearly enjoying the moment. When Diane Keaton, Candice Bergen, Jane Fonda and Mary Steenburgen gather in one place for any reason, you know something special is happening. This first day of shooting on *Book Club* was particularly notable. The ladies were on their way to becoming best buddies when Mother Nature started to put on *her* show. Eager to experience the phenomenon, the cast quickly donned their special glasses.

Erin Simms, PGA member and producer of the film, had the “bright” idea to grab this awesome picture. She says, “They were actually sold out of eclipse glasses all over the city, but thankfully some crew members had wisely stocked up beforehand, so we were all passing them around and sharing. This photo captured a moment that was completely unplanned, and we suddenly realized that while the eclipse was incredible, witnessing these four legends working together for the first time was truly a total eclipse of the heart.”

Simms' fellow producer on *Book Club* was another PGA member, Bill Holderman. The talented duo also co-wrote the movie, and Holderman was the director as well.

On a scientific note—this was dubbed the Great American Eclipse because it was visible within a band that spanned the entire contiguous United States. It had been nearly a century since the last time (1918) that happened. Hollywood and the heavens in perfect sync—it doesn't get any better than that! ■

---

*We know what you're thinking. "Best of all time? No way. I've got an on-set photo way better than that." If that's the case, we dare you to prove it. Submit it to [BOSPOAT@producersguild.org](mailto:BOSPOAT@producersguild.org). Before you submit, please review the contest rules at [producersguild.org/bospoat](http://producersguild.org/bospoat). Because no matter how great your photo is, we have no desire to get sued over it.*



ROLLING HILLS



SCENIC  
LANDSCAPES



RUINS



TROPICAL BEACHES



INDUSTRIAL



ROCKY SHORES



EUROPEAN  
ARCHITECTURE

# CAMERA-READY



Locations, Infrastructure & Incentives.  
It's all available at [www.filmusvi.com](http://www.filmusvi.com)



THE YEAR'S MOST ACCLAIMED NEW COMEDY

**13** **EMMY® NOMINATIONS**  
INCLUDING  
**OUTSTANDING COMEDY SERIES**

“THERE SIMPLY WAS  
NO OTHER TV EXPERIENCE  
LIKE IT THIS YEAR.”

*VARIETY*



**RUSSIAN  
DOLL**

**N**

FYC.NETFLIX.COM



in the

“I

"I cannot watch something and not know what happens. If someone else knows, they have to tell me."

Sydney Sweeney lives for spoilers, but her success has been no secret since her memorable turns in Hulu's *The Handmaid's Tale* (as Eden) and HBO's *Sharp Objects* (as Alice). Even so, her work was so skilled that many viewers didn't realize she played both parts.

"I wish I could go back to myself a few years ago and tell her that it's all going to be okay," she says. That younger self made a five-year plan and convinced her parents to let her audition for a movie that was filming in her hometown of Spokane, Washington. After landing that part, she went on to score many more, including Emaline in Netflix's *Everything Sucks* and Cassie in HBO's upcoming *Euphoria*.

Adapted from a 2012 Israeli series by writer-executive producer Sam Levinson and starring Zendaya, *Euphoria* examines teens, drugs, sex, identity and violence. Sweeney calls it "a very raw and real look at growing up and what it's like to be a teenager in this world. I think it's going to be very shocking for a lot of people, because many shows — I'm not saying it's bad — have sugar-coated reality."

Sweeney creates a character journal for every role she plays. "Cassie's journal is very artsy, but in a dramatic way," she says. "Every page is different, because she hasn't really found her thing yet. So she tries on these different looks and attitudes, and tries to fit in in places that she shouldn't fit in."

Fitting in isn't Sweeney's thing either. She likes being cast against type, never wanting to play the girl next door or be the prettiest version of herself. "I never felt like I could be the prettiest girl," she admits. "I was very self-conscious. And I also loved the meatiness that other characters had, so I dove into those."

Watching her dives so far (including one she literally takes in a shocking episode of *The Handmaid's Tale*), it looks like any project Sweeney lands is bound to make a splash. — Katie Grant

► **BIO PICK**  
**Diving  
In**

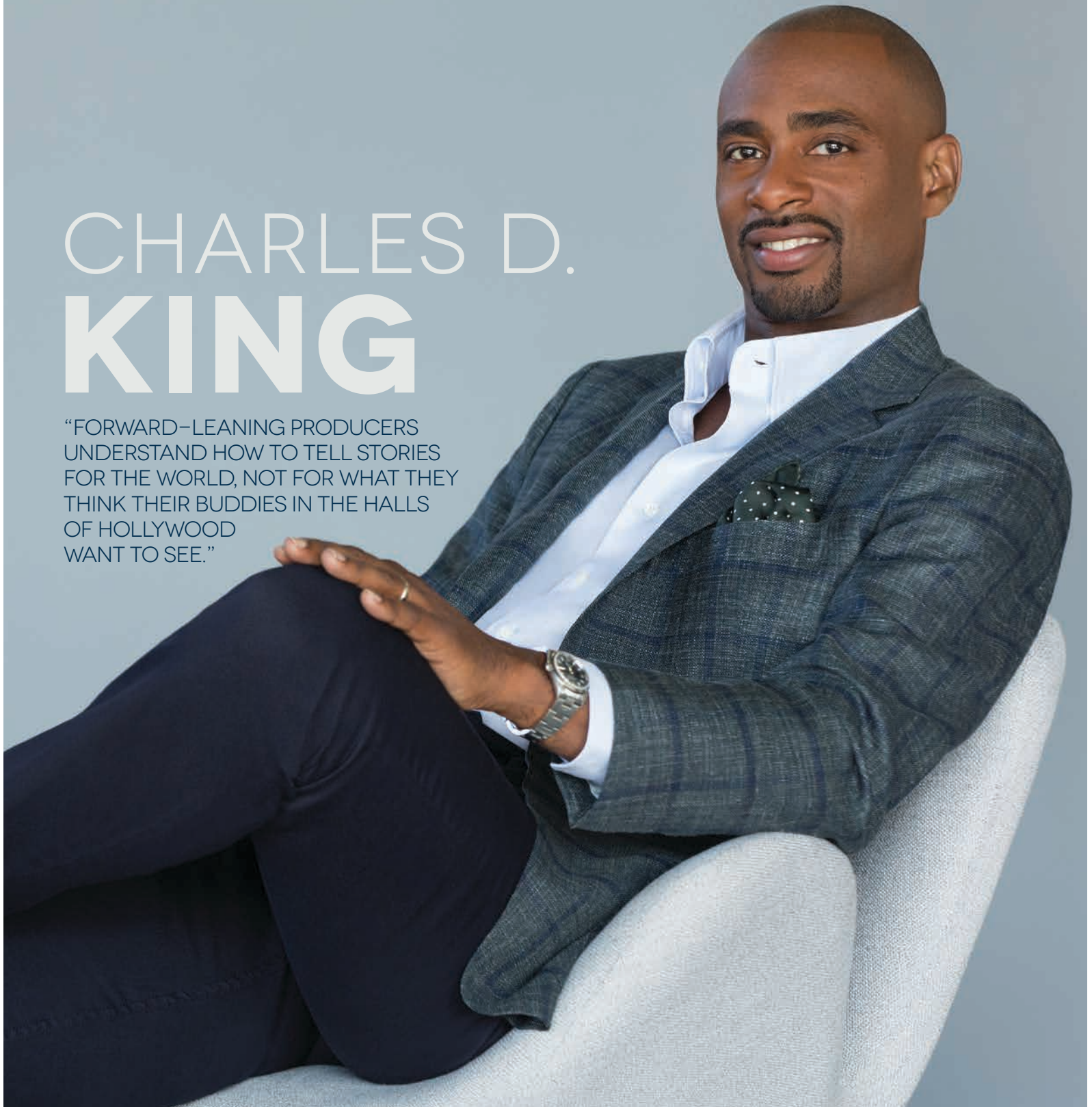
BROOKLYN ROSENSTOCK

# PRODUCED BY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // JUNE | JULY 2018

## CHARLES D. KING

"FORWARD-LEANING PRODUCERS UNDERSTAND HOW TO TELL STORIES FOR THE WORLD, NOT FOR WHAT THEY THINK THEIR BUDDIES IN THE HALLS OF HOLLYWOOD WANT TO SEE."







# NATU BORN PROD

# RAL

# UCER

**INDIE VETERAN  
LYNETTE HOWELL  
TAYLOR TAKES AIM  
AT THE HEART OF  
HOLLYWOOD**

WRITTEN BY  
KATIE GRANT

PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
KREMER JOHNSON  
PHOTOGRAPHY

**“T**he truth is I feel like I’ve been producing since I was five, or maybe three. My mother was the one who always said to me, ‘When you were in preschool, you were the one telling everybody where they should play and organizing everybody. So in some ways, it’s just kind of in your nature.’”

Lynette Howell Taylor sinks into the oversized denim-covered easy chair in the white brick-walled conference room at 51 Entertainment (her latest production company)—no makeup, a long sweater coat, hair down, bottle of water in hand. Everything about Howell Taylor—her attitude, her environment, her willingness to share—seems easy. There is no artifice here—not in the room and not in this very successful indie-turned-Hollywood producer who already has over 30 credits to her roster before hitting 40, including indie hits *Half Nelson*, *Blue Valentine* and *Captain Fantastic*. This fall marks her biggest credit to date, Bradley Cooper’s remake of *A Star Is Born*, starring Cooper and Lady Gaga.

Howell Taylor, of course, backs up her mom, “You recognize that there is a confidence in your ability,” she says. “You’re not afraid of being in charge. You’re not afraid of making decisions on behalf of yourself and other people, and I think that’s something that you can certainly learn, but it’s also something that a lot of people are just kind of born with.”

Howell Taylor’s love of story began in Liverpool, England where she grew up in a blended family of five kids and her working-class parents. If her head wasn’t buried in a book, escaping into the worlds of *The Lord of the Rings* or *Sweet Valley High*, she was performing with her brothers and sisters in the backyard—and by age 11, charging for tickets.

She spent her formative years acting in musicals with a youth theatre and might have become an actor if she hadn’t been rejected from the Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts’ acting program. The head of the drama program passed her application on to the head of the Music, Theatre and Entertainment Management program, and she was promptly accepted.

In retrospect, it was a fortunate turn of events. “Oh my god,” she declares with palpable relief, “thank god [producing] is what I’m doing and not the



other ... I just didn't enjoy performing as much as I enjoyed the other side. It's a very entrepreneurial program. And to me, that's the cornerstone of producing—figuring out how to manage not only yourself but also a business and other people and situations and projects. I really learned the foundation of those skills while I was at that university."

After receiving her diploma from Sir Paul McCartney himself, founder of the school, she worked for an agent and then a casting director in London. But casting fell flat for her, and she was itching to get into production, specifically musicals. So that casting director put a call in to a producer and got her a job as an assistant. "I was so lucky that I had these incredible

mentors that just helped me," she adds.

The musical she went to work on was financed and produced by the company East of Doheny, which eventually provided her ticket to LA. She arrived in Southern California and was overseeing the various shows the company produced in the West End and on Broadway, loving every minute. "I was working in musical theater. I was working for a producer, and it was awesome."

The jump from theatre production to film was prompted by watching every hour of the behind-the-scenes footage for Peter Jackson's adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*, the book she regularly escaped into as a kid. "The reason I got into the movies was pure escapism," she admits.

"I was just fascinated by how that

[film] came to be," she continues, "and how as a storyteller, you could make that. I was obsessed. 'Wow, how did they do this?' I love big fantasy, I love *Star Wars*, and I'm a big science fiction fan. I love the escapism of it, the notion that stories can take you to this other place."

Howell Taylor has made all kinds of movies and considers herself "platform agnostic," but when asked about the common thread among her varied credits, she has a ready answer. "That's easy. It's character. Genre to me is irrelevant. We all want to feel like we care about the people

**Producer Lynette Howell Taylor (left of center) consults with director Matt Ross (seated) while on location for *Captain Fantastic*.**



PHOTOGRAPH BY REGAN MACSTRANIC



that we're watching. It's not just about the plot or the events or the story. It's about human nature and the specificity that defines us and makes each individual character who they are. So I'm always drawn to the projects that have strong characters. The plot is so secondary."

Guided by that conviction, Howell Taylor has assiduously sought out collaborators who can match and extend her passion. "For me, producing is the practical application of making somebody else's vision a reality. I've always seen that as my role, an enabler of someone else's idea ... I can love a script, I can love the story, but if I'm not excited by the filmmaker, then it's not for me, it's not the right project, and I'm not the right person. But it's incredibly exciting to me to find a short, meet the filmmaker and [go on] to help them become the filmmaker that they are destined to be."

She helps a burgeoning filmmaker achieve that vision by instilling a realistic

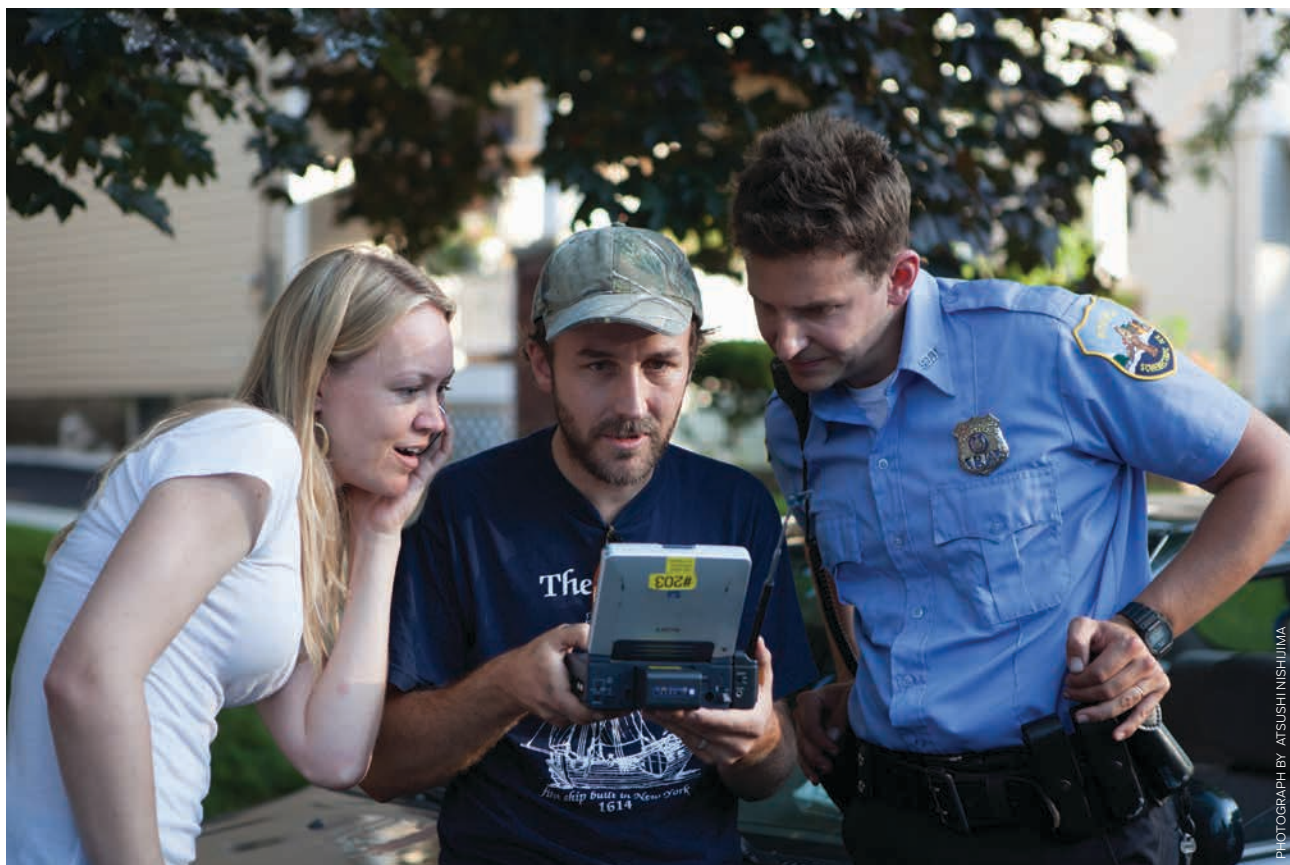
understanding of their budget, walking them through decisions that will directly affect their vision or sharing her knowledge and experience to let them "be the best that they can be" without overwhelming their creative voice. She calls to mind a "visionary Sherpa," someone who easily carries your heavy load and tends to your every need but is unflinchingly honest about the rough terrain you are about to enter. She especially loves working with first-time filmmakers and directors, like Andrew Okpeaha MacLean (*On the Ice*), Brie Larson (*Unicorn Store*) and of course, Bradley Cooper.

Howell Taylor was brought on relatively late in the game for *A Star is Born*, joining the already robust team of

producers that included Bill Gerber and Cooper himself. That kind of collaboration is what brings her the greatest joy. "[Bradley] and I had worked together on *The Place Beyond the Pines* and he called me out of the blue. There [were] a lot of great, competent producers on the movie, but there was a lot to do, and Bradley wanted to bring me on ... to really have a voice creatively. So I was deeply involved in the script development work with everyone else."

Asked what makes a story good enough to remake, she answers, "I mean, love is timeless. It's a love story and, as Bradley says, 'What better way to express love than through music?' Because you can't hide in music, and I think it's,

Lynette Howell Taylor reviews footage with director Derek Cianfrance (center) and cast member Bradley Cooper (right) on the set of *The Place Beyond the Pines*.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA





like anything, specificity of character [that makes] any story fresh.

"And that, to me, is what this new incarnation is," she continues. "I think it has enough about it that the fans of the original will feel that we've paid homage to those films. But [Bradley's] done his own version."

We discussed how *A Star Is Born* shot at live concerts like Coachella, Stagecoach and Glastonbury to capture the true crowd feel and avoid prerecorded singing per Lady Gaga's suggestion. Howell Taylor reports, "It was complicated. It was a lot of coordination and a lot of relationships. But that's why it took a lot of us to make that movie."

"Bradley was the true leader of all of us," she elaborates. "He had very clear vision for what he wanted to do, but more than anything, such a deep passion for the material and a commitment to excellence. When you work with somebody who is committed to that level of quality, it makes everybody rise to the occasion."

With this current studio piece under her belt and Oscar buzz starting already, will Howell Taylor ever return to the indie fold? "Yes," she answers. "The primary reason I will always do indies is because that's where you discover new voices."

Those new voices, however, still come at a price when talking financing. She contends, whether she's working with an unknown filmmaker or big names in the business, the fight to finance remains the same. "I'm still dealing with the same issues I was dealing with when I started. I've made a lot of movies where no one wants to finance them before they're made: *Half Nelson*, *Blue Valentine*, *Captain Fantastic*. People that do want to make them, want to make them for a lot less than what they need to be made for. I am forever trying to figure out how to deal with that gap, between financial safety and what the movie needs to be."

She's constantly trying to get the script that's on the page made for the budget it demands. The usual objections—it's too risky; can we change the cast?; and can we do it for this budget number instead?—haven't changed. "[Like in 2010] ... when no one wanted to buy *Blue Valentine*, and then it ends up getting distributed and it gets

nominated for all these awards, suddenly, everybody loves it. So then you go into all these meetings with financiers and studios and they're like, 'We really want to make a *Blue Valentine*.'"

Howell Taylor learned about financing from the other side of the table at East of Doheny, who were financiers as well as producers. She found "being the first stop" for investors a fascinating role, learning the best ways to approach people for money, and more importantly, the best ways *not* to.

"Ultimately," she reflects, "I realized that every company and every individual that decides to finance something has their own reasons for doing it. And you have to figure out what their reasons are—you can't talk them into *your* reasons for why they should do it. Learning that lesson early on was really the foundation for me figuring out how to go and find partners for the movies I want to work on."

Working on a film, for Howell Taylor, even meant venturing to the other side of the camera on one occasion. The experience only reinforced her deep love and respect for actors, when she was tapped to play a role in *The Place Beyond the Pines* for Derek Cianfrance. (Sadly for her fans, her character ultimately didn't end up in the film.)

"Derek is so committed to truth and his actors really embodying their characters," she observes. "He wants to do whatever he can to make those experiences in front of the camera as honest as possible. Even if he has a script, he loves to improvise. So he asked me if I would play a role that was in support of Bradley's character ... just to provide more color."

Howell Taylor said yes and approached the challenge with total focus, leading the improvised scene with Cooper and Emory Cohen. "It wasn't scripted, and I was fucking terrified," she admits. "So I said, 'Okay, I cannot be a producer today.'" Howell Taylor was picked up by a teamster to get to set, sat in hair and makeup, was fitted in wardrobe and was greeted by the first PA, who walked her to set like any other cast member. "I rode through the full process and I'm terrified the whole time.

And what I realized was that every single interaction I had on that day helped me. So when I stepped in front of the camera, I was able to do what I was there to do.

"It really made me appreciate what kind of conditions you need to provide for your actors," she continues, "in order for them to do what ultimately is the most important thing. You can prep your movies every which way but, at the end of the day, if your actors don't have a space to work within that allows them to do their best, it's literally all for nothing. Getting to know the other side of that was the most incredible experience, and I'm so grateful to Derek for giving me that."

Howell Taylor also feels fortunate to be in a position where she can consciously choose content that's more representative of the diversity of her audience. I asked her if she sees a creative cost to that choice. "I don't think that there's a cost to doing it at all," she answers. "I think that the cost, if anything, is just the continuing effort to educate the industry that there's a benefit to it. But it doesn't feel like a cost, it feels like a responsibility."

And she is determined to carry that responsibility to her crew. "In front of camera,

I've always had a pretty good commitment to inclusivity and diversity. But she admits, "Definitely behind the camera, I have not had the same level of representation. So I have a deep commitment to the projects that I'm producing, moving forward, to making sure I improve that. But there's no cost to it. There's only opportunity."

What's next on her plate? Howell Taylor is moving into heavy development. She plans to "really focus more on optioning books, optioning articles and working with artists earlier on [in the process]." Perhaps that will help her fulfill her wish "to contribute positively to the content that [my daughter] watches." She sees everything her kids watch and doesn't worry about the strong protagonists available to her son, but her young daughter, although a tomboy and fierce soccer player, is already obsessed with princesses. Howell Taylor aims to solidify the notion that "she can do and be anything."

It's a notion she's clearly taken to heart when she reflects, "I think if I hadn't gone into the arts, I would have tried to be an astronaut." Let's be glad she stayed here on earth and managed to find another way to reach the stars. ■

Howell Taylor with director Matt Ross on the set of *Captain Fantastic*



PHOTOGRAPH BY REGAN MACSTRAVIC



# PRODUCEDBY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // FEBRUARY | MARCH 2019

## MIKE FARAH

"WHEN I GOT THERE IN  
THE SUMMER OF 2008,  
I JUST KNEW I COULD  
SELL FUNNY OR DIE."





# IN HER OWN LANE

**DANY GARCIA'S UNIQUE STRATEGY  
FOR PRODUCTION MAGIC**

WRITTEN BY KATIE GRANT





“I” M a very frustrated individual who really

wants to globally impact the world through my thoughts,” admits PGA member Dany Garcia. “I just haven’t gotten there.” One might beg to differ with the former Merrill Lynch VP turned producer, manager and media mogul, who lives and breathes her passion for enterprise, especially this goal of building one with global impact. That enterprise was built with ex-husband and still client, Dwayne (The Rock) Johnson, based on the belief she could create a corporate model around an individual in a way that had never been done before.

It’s a notion that has paid off. According to *Forbes’* Celebrity 100 list, “DJ,” as Garcia calls him, is now the highest paid actor in Hollywood. (While George Clooney was No. 1 on the list, he can credit that position largely to having sold his tequila company in 2018 for \$700 million.) But the real boost to Johnson’s profile stems from his own personally written social media postings for his 190 million global followers. And in fact, the social media strategy Garcia and Johnson have embraced, of putting their audience first and keeping them intimately connected to Dwayne, is the brainchild the producer prides herself—and their success—on.

“DJ was six to seven years within the WWE,” she explains. “I loved business so much, I was convinced I could build a corporate model around an individual, if it was the right individual. And DJ is. From the moment I met him on [the University of Miami] campus ... within him I [could] see this magic.” That vision met its first major test when Johnson began his transition from wrestler to movie star. “The audience used to see him twice or three times a week in their living room. Intimately. Like, you’re hanging out in your PJs in the morning and the Rock’s there. He’s your buddy. So what was taken away was something weekly, where people would invest in that relationship. For social media, it was like, there it is. We aren’t wrestling every week on TV, but we’re doing this.”

Garcia considers herself an “enterprise producer.” For her, “What that means is, each project we do, my job is not only the film but the on-the-ground production. My responsibility is the project: the relationship of the project to the entire cast, the relationship of the project to the studio and then, the relationship of the project to the audience. I produce the entire experience.

“It’s also one of the reasons why a lot of our films feel so big,” she continues, “because we are actually activating multiple mechanisms, in addition to what the project is. So if you’re going to do that, even if it’s a small, little \$1 million project, or it’s a very large \$200 million-plus project, that project has to be large in scope to be able to activate all the mechanisms, to really activate my position.” At a baseline,



PHOTO COURTESY OF IDRIS ERBA

Executive Producer  
Dany Garcia (second  
from right) on the set  
of *The Titan Games*  
with her producing  
team, including fellow  
EP Dwayne Johnson  
(second from left)

Garcia feels that the ideas of her projects need to resonate strongly enough to live on for the next decade. She wants them to impact not only the audience that sees a given film but also those who will only ever see the trailer.

Garcia's penchant for numbers and mind for business emerged from her background as a daughter of Cuban immigrant parents and her determination to create a better life for them. She grew up in New Jersey amidst a family of musical hopefuls, including a brother and a sister who went to the U of Miami on performance scholarships. Garcia herself plays piano and the French horn, but the producer always knew she wanted to make money more than she wanted to make music. She majored in international marketing and finance and learned how to be the

only woman in high-powered rooms from her professors there.

"So that strategy was practice, practice, practice, practice," she recalls. "It was prepare, prepare, prepare, prepare. Be so good, so that by the time you did speak, or you were in the room, you knew. So I was concentrating on one thing—to be that prepared and that good. And what happened, concentrating on that, it took care of all the other things."

The Garcia Companies and Seven Bucks Productions' roster is vast and varied, including documentaries (*Racing Dreams*), reality TV (*Wakeup Call*), competition shows (*Titan Games*, *The Hero*), big budget features (*Rampage*,

*Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*, *Baywatch*), action (*Skyscraper*) and drama (*Lovely, Still*), to name a few. Garcia sees the through-line as heart. "I have this obsession to have done something that really puts people in a different place, a better place and to have that happen globally ... I'm very concerned about how you feel once you leave the experience."

For Garcia moving the company forward in today's industry is a matter of "trying to look for more magic." You can't get much more magical than Disney, and that's exactly where they've developed one of their most anticipated productions. *Jungle Cruise*, based on the famous Disneyland ride, and starring Johnson and Emily Blunt, opens in 2020. It's difficult for Garcia to contain her excitement about the film, given the level of secrecy it requires. "The Dwayne in [*Jungle Cruise*] has never been seen before," she declares. And insofar as the *Jungle Cruise* is one of the rare Disney attractions that isn't attached to a pre-existing story, Garcia and her team got a taste of what it's like to create with the Imagineers from the ground up.

"It was culturally, for us, a fantastic experience," she smiles. "[It] absolutely impacted how we look at our own people. We like to consider ourselves Imagineers as well, we really get out of the box ... It's just the collection of these very unique individuals who are nurtured to be as expansive and out of the box as possible."

The *Jungle Cruise* social media strategy is a new twist for TGC. "Instead of the conversation behind the scenes," she says, "we're going to be a little more forward-facing. Because everyone does know the *Jungle Cruise*, we don't really have to do that type of work. But we want to begin the transporting into the magic and fun. It lies in a little bit more tactile experiences, because we have the parks all over the world.

"And then we'll allow the social media to just sort of gloss over the top," she continues. "If we do it correctly—which I think we will, absolutely—we can just use [the Disney] magic as well. If you went into Disney and there were no lines, you would be 'Ahhh, this is going to be great.' That [feeling] is our goal."







Garcia (right) at the premiere of *Skyscraper*, with Donna Simone Johnson.

“I AM CONTINUOUSLY TRAINING MYSELF TO NOT BE COMFORTABLE; ANY OLD PROCESS MAKES FOR COMFORT.”

Their latest feature, *Fighting with My Family*, based on the documentary of the same name, marked Garcia's first time at Sundance. It's a classic underdog story based in the world of WWE and a working-class family of four from Great Britain. Even if you're not a wrestling fan, you'll be rooting for the characters to make it. Garcia singles out the spot-on casting, with Vince Vaughn garnering laughs as the “bad cop” coach and real wrestlers handling much of the stunt work. “It's so dangerous,” she reports, “that you can't have your talent come in to take bumps. There were moves that [cast member] Florence [Pugh] could do, though, and that's why it looks so seamless. But in the end, it's not a wrestling story, it's a story about dreams coming true.”

Outside of business life, Garcia is a competitive physique body builder who trains alongside DJ and her husband/their mutual trainer, Dave Rienzi. Asked if there was anything she uses in her bodybuilding practice that applies to her producing career, she confirms, “Yes there's actually a tremendous amount. Whenever I do get a chance to step on stage, there's a direct correlation between my contest prep and the amount of productivity that happens in the next six to 12 months. There is a discipline process whenever you prep. I go up in weight in the off-season. And then I have to come down in weight. When you come down in weight, obviously you're dieting and it's really strict. You begin to shed all the things that make you eat chocolate cake. Every time I go through that process, it redefines in my head all the areas that I've allowed some softness, where I'm not all that sharp. Through that process I become very, very focused, very clean, very sharp. And there's a purity that has to be in everything around me, so I don't have these pressures to need an outlet of relief that is a drink or chocolate or a little bit more carbs. That has to move. And then everything becomes very efficient. I can come back into the creative process and I can cut through. It's wonderful. You are really energetically clear.”

Every time Garcia trains, the process differs depending on her body and the competition. And in fact she is constantly shedding old processes. “That makes me very comfortable with doing things brand new with every project. I am continuously training myself to not be comfortable; any old process makes for comfort. To be in a space that you're challenged continuously ... I like to say, 'I'm used to the wind being in my face because there's no one in front of me.' You get chapped lips. You've got to build yourself up ... being the only one who's doing what [I'm] doing, the way [I'm] doing it. So having that, not being attached to holding on to processes, [is] very, very beneficial.”

Garcia acknowledges she is a role model to other female producers and women of color, although she didn't set out to

be. "When that became more apparent to me over the last three years, four years—of the importance of my role—it was such a good realization because it allowed me to honor what I'm doing. Now my steps are not only, 'Are they important for the execution in business?' But they may actually carry some importance to the rest of the world. And you remember my overall goal, right? Global [impact]. So it was funny to realize that, 'Wait, you're there. You're doing it. Honor yourself more so they can honor what they're doing.'"

Since the #metoo movement and fight for equal pay, Garcia has seen a direct impact in her work, noting that, "It did make me look at how we were doing movies." Garcia now hires her female leads first; in doing so she aims to cut any difficult conversations about salary comparisons off at the pass.

But she goes a step further. "I am working to be more vocal," she states. "We cannot be successful in a quiet manner. We must be successful as loudly as possible. So that everyone else can see, and they can learn, and they can be inspired, and they can say, 'I can do that.' We aren't doing our job if we are just quietly being successful. We have a bigger responsibility."

Garcia is striving to meet that responsibility with *The Titan Games* (NBC), a reality series that's billed as "a groundbreaking new athletic competition." Garcia explains, "There is a great female story that's going to come out of it. The audience is used to seeing men be physical and achieve great things. But women, they don't have that same kind of exposure."

"We have it in the Olympics," she owns. "But this is a matter of brute strength. What happens with our women is they quickly reach their physical max because we don't change weights between men and women ... maybe one or two. But the women quickly get to the point of physical fatigue. You see them go through it emotionally, and then they come out the other side. That's greatness ... to have the honor of witnessing that and the

majesty of it."

Invited to consider the nature of her ultimate legacy, Garcia reflects, "At the end of the day, I think I would love [my legacy to be] not only the enterprise and the body of work, but a true understanding of my philosophies and how I believe things can happen, that the way we executed can be teachable to the world and impactful to people's lives and goals."

"I have no—" she breaks off, widening her frame of reference. "We have no time to break any glass ceilings. If we're breaking glass ceilings here, then that means we are not spending enough time creating. I like working that way. That's the way that the world should be ... Going

---

"I HAVE THIS OBSESSION TO HAVE DONE SOMETHING THAT REALLY PUTS PEOPLE IN A DIFFERENT PLACE, A BETTER PLACE, AND TO HAVE THAT HAPPEN GLOBALLY... I'M VERY CONCERNED ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL ONCE YOU LEAVE THE EXPERIENCE."

---

forward our films will be very sensitive to [those factors]: This is how the world is or how the world is maybe working to get that way." Garcia has already created a place for herself in that shift. It's just a matter of how far she can extend her magic. ■



# PRODUCED BY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // OCTOBER | NOVEMBER 2019

THE PRODUCING  
TEAM THAT PUT THE  
HUSTLE IN *HUSTLERS*  
P. 30

BETTING ON  
SHORT-FORM FOR  
THE LONG HAUL  
P. 36

## DONALD DE LINE

"WHAT'S GREAT ABOUT BEING A  
PRODUCER IS YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT THE  
WEEK WILL BRING, BREATHING NEW LIFE  
INTO SOMETHING IN A WAY YOU DIDN'T  
THINK POSSIBLE THE WEEK BEFORE."



# WINNING

PRODUCING PARTNERS  
NEVER GAVE UP THE FIGHT  
TO BRING THEIR CURRENT  
PROJECT TO THE SCREEN

WRITTEN BY KATIE GRANT

**W**HAT HAPPENS WHEN A STELLAR SCRIPT, STRAIGHT FROM THE BLACK LIST, GETS MADE INTO A POTENTIALLY GREAT MOVIE, ONLY TO HAVE IT CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRES OF A NOTORIOUS SCANDAL AROUND ITS FORMERLY GREAT, NOW UNCREDITED, PRODUCER? IN THE CASE OF *THE CURRENT WAR*, TWO OF ITS PRODUCERS, BASIL IWANYK AND TIMUR BEKMAMBETOV, NEVER GAVE UP ON THAT POTENTIAL GREATNESS, ULTIMATELY FRONTING THEIR OWN FUNDS FOR RESHOOTS, RECUTS AND RESCORING THE MOVIE TO RESTORE THE CREATIVE VISION OF THE DIRECTOR, ALFONSO GOMEZ-REJON. THE STORY OF HOW *THE CURRENT WAR* MORPHED INTO ITS EXISTING FORM COULD BE A MOVIE

ALL ITS OWN, COMPLETE WITH THE HERO SAVING THE DAY AT THE 11TH HOUR AND A FEW FUNDAMENTAL LESSONS IN WHAT PRODUCING IS ALL ABOUT.

"IT'S JUST A GOOD MAN WHO MAKES BAD DECISIONS IN THE SEARCH FOR GREATNESS," IWANYK NOTES OF *THE CURRENT WAR*'S MAIN CHARACTER, THOMAS EDISON, PLAYED BY BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH. *THE CURRENT WAR* RECOUNTS THE STORY OF THE CUTTHROAT RACE AMONG EDISON, GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE AND NIKOLAI TESLA TO BRING ELECTRICITY TO THE EASTERN SEABOARD IN THE 1880S. "IT WAS AN ABSOLUTELY BEAUTIFUL SCRIPT. I THOUGHT IT FELT LIKE *THE SOCIAL NETWORK*, LIKE A PERIOD MOVIE THAT WAS DONE IN SUCH A CONTEMPORARY, FRESH WAY."



# THE WAR



*The Current War*, initially a Weinstein Company production, was pushed for early release—apparently to beat the news of Harvey Weinstein’s past going public—in a rushed cut that did not fit with the director’s vision. After The Weinstein Company’s collapse, the film was shelved for two years, only to be saved by the William Morris Endeavor agency. Gomez-Rejon’s lawyer there found a contractual clause granting the director’s mentor, Martin Scorsese, final cut. Up until that point, Scorsese had yet to even see a cut. This gave Iwanyk and Bekmambetov a chance to move back in the direction of painting the competition among the three inventors as more a modern Bill Gates versus Steve Jobs or Mark Zuckerberg versus the Winklevoss twins story than a mere period piece.

Iwanyk recalls, “The loophole came from WME and their lawyer, P.J. Shapiro. We never gave up, and they never gave up, and Benedict never gave up saying, ‘Okay, we are going to lock hands here and we’re going to figure this out.’ And remember, I’m friends with all these people but still, agents and producers are often on other sides of the table. On this one, we all got together and said, ‘We’re not going to allow this thing to die.’ And so I’d love to take credit for it with Timur and Alfonso, but I’ve got to give a lot of credit to the reps. They were amazing.”

Another amazing tale is how Bekmambetov found the story. “I had a dream to make a movie about Tesla for 10 years. I didn’t find a good story. And the first time I read Michael Mitnick’s screenplay, I finally understood that I should make a movie not about Tesla, but about Edison,” he explains. “We can understand Tesla better through Edison’s point of view. Every story I read was about some freaky, crazy guy and absolutely unrelatable. To make the story understandable you need that bridge. You need a normal guy with relatable weaknesses and talents.”

Both producers have serendipitous connections to Edison’s story. Iwanyk’s maternal grandmother actually lived next door to Edison in New Jersey, and his other grandmother worked for Westinghouse. Bekmambetov’s father and brother were both electrical engineers in the Soviet Union. He himself even went to the Moscow Power Engineering Institute. “I spent two years, and I was fired because I spent more time directing shows in the theater than studying electric stuff. Then I studied as a production designer for six years at the Alexander Ostrovsky Theatrical and Artistic Institute.”

As such, getting this story out there in the way the script promised, following Gomez-Rejon’s creative approach, was more than just a bone to pick for each of them. The way they collectively dug their heels in to get the movie back after the hasty original cut speaks to the power of producing.

Iwanyk says, “The dailies were amazing ... in some ways, the dailies were so great, and the performances were so great, that it brought Harvey closer to the movie, because he smelled something that could be spectacular. And he held onto it really tight, and usually, when somebody holds onto something very tight, it becomes dysfunctional. And so our post process quickly



*The Current War*  
producer Timur  
Bekmambetov

---

“I THINK FOR CENTURIES  
OUR ANCESTORS WERE  
TRYING TO CREATE  
A TRUST BETWEEN  
PEOPLE ... I LEARNED  
THAT THE ONLY WAY  
TO CREATE THIS TRUST  
IS TO TELL STORIES.”

---



became dysfunctional.”

Once that happened, Iwanyk’s approach was to keep going. “You can’t ever give up. And I believe so much in Alfonso, personally and professionally, and I saw what he did and sacrificed for the movie, that even on that level, I was never going to surrender.

“But I also thought, ‘This movie could be great. And I’m not going to allow [anyone] to harm this movie.’ And I’ve got to tell you, there were incredibly dark days. And even when it’s at the most despairing, darkest place, if you believe in it, you just have to push forward.”

He continues, “I have to say, of all the movies that I’ve ever worked on in my entire career, I’ve never had a more cohesive and effective and functional relationship with the talent and their reps, as I’ve done in this movie. And so I have to hand it to Mike Simpson, Roger Green and Chris Donnelly on behalf of Alfonso, and Billy Lazarus on behalf of Benedict and Nick Hoult. We were all on the phone two, sometimes three, days a week. We were all in it together.”

That stick-to-itiveness comes honestly to each of these producers, who chose their own paths to storytelling through cinema. Iwanyk headed straight to a mail-room post at Warner Bros. after studying political science at Villanova. He knew he didn’t want to be a lawyer and wanted to give his passion for movies a shot. He fully assumed he’d be back in New Jersey a couple years later if it didn’t work out, but that was in 1992 and he’s still here, heading his company, Thunder Road Pictures.

Iwanyk’s desire to tell stories through film came after he saw *Ordinary People*. “At first, I just enjoyed movies. For me, they were an incredible escape. It was *Star Wars*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the John Hughes movies. I was blown away by those movies. And then, as I got a little bit older, the first time I saw a movie that didn’t exist for my enjoyment and my entertainment—but existed for me to think about life differently—was *Ordinary People*. When I saw that movie, it shook me to the core.

“I thought, ‘This movie doesn’t exist just to thrill me. This movie exists for other reasons.’ And I think that was the first movie when I realized, ‘OK, this is a form. This is a way of storytelling that could go above and beyond entertainment.’ They could coexist—don’t get me wrong—but it was the first time I realized the emotional power of it.”

Iwanyk’s time at Warner Bros. taught him about three fundamentals of producing: one’s own point of view, relationships and writing notes. “The only thing you really have is your point of view, as an executive or as a producer, because we’re

not writing or directing anything. So understand what that point of view is.

“Two, sometimes it’s about relationships and about trusting people. That even though you may not be completely on board, you should trust in people who may be right. And then, the third thing was, they taught me how to write notes. I was writing five or six sets of notes a week. It was hell. It made you go into your instinct, and listen to yourself about why you’re not responding to certain things on a script or on a cut.”

Bekmambetov, on the other hand, started as a writer and ended up directing his





Above: Director Alfonso Gomez-Rejon with producer Basil Iwanyk  
Left: Director of photography Chung-hoon Chung, Stanley Townsend, Gomez-Rejon



own movie because he couldn't find a satisfactory director. And the same was true for producing. "Then I couldn't find a good producer to produce my next movie, and I became a producer myself. And since the end of the '90s, I'm directing and producing at the same time. It's just about the freedom and to have responsibility. As you know, it is easier to ask forgiveness than to ask permission." His company, Bazelevs, produces movies and commercials and houses his creation, Screenlife, "an innovative digital language that tells a whole narrative within the frames of a screen."

"I think for centuries our ancestors were trying to create a trust between people. Between people and nature, people and God, and the universe. I learned that the only way to create this trust is to tell stories. You can't dictate what they should feel," Bekmambetov explains. "You should just tell them the story. They will all love, cry, have fun or be scared. Just emotions. Emotions, a collective experience, help to create this kind of trust between people."

"And I believe we cannot save the world or change the world by creating rules or dictating. What we can do, as filmmakers, is just tell stories—emotional and touchable and inspiring stories. And these stories will change people. I believe this movie, *The Current War*, is a movie which potentially will help people





to understand how inspiring, but how dangerous, is technology.”

Although the two producers had not previously worked together, and their producing roles were very different on *The Current War*—Bekmambetov as the one who generated the material and Iwanyk as the one on the ground to get the movie made—they became a really good team.

Bekmambetov explains, “I cannot imagine this movie being made without [Basil], because he is like the spine of the production process. I was involved more in development. I just inspired this, let’s say. He was literally in charge to drive this process. And he was, until the end, the driver. He did everything. It’s about his ability to force people to do what he thinks is right and to listen to what they’re saying, and to be able to find the

elegant. That contribution is very important—to be creative as a producer. To find a way to make things happen.”

In the end, they both followed Iwanyk’s belief in betting on yourself. “On a financial level, if you have the opportunity, bet on yourself—because if it works, the windfall, financially, is great. So, don’t be afraid to spend your own money,” Iwanyk says.

Self-financing is what helped save *The Current War* from the wrong creative road it went down in post. But they did much more than bet on themselves. They bet on the quality of the material, the caliber of the performances, the creativity of the camerawork and the vision of the director. Holding onto that vision is a job that both these producers take very seriously. They are hoping and betting that the rest

of us respond positively, as they did, to the story of three historical visionaries. As Bekmambetov puts it, “We live in the world of these visionaries and inventors, and they will really change the future. They are the real heroes, not soldiers, not boxers, not politicians. I believe inventors are the most influential and attractive characters in today’s world.”

He adds, “It’s about cinema. Cinema is an unbelievable source of magic. You know, power. Of course, I’m just a part of the process. And that’s the case [for all] art, but specifically cinema. It’s like we’re dreaming for two hours. In that vein, it’s magic.”

*The Current War* can be seen as a collective invention of these two talented producers. They are hoping their creation will allow us to see ourselves in the magic reflected on the screen. ■



# PRODUCED BY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA // OCTOBER | NOVEMBER 2018

A portrait of Donna Gigliotti, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a dark blue pinstriped blazer over a white top. She is sitting on a wooden bench outdoors, with green foliage in the background. The lighting is soft and natural.

## DONNA GIGLIOTTI

"BEING THROWN IN THE DEEP  
END, YOU EITHER FIGURE  
OUT REAL FAST WHAT FILM  
PRODUCTION MEANS, OR YOU'RE  
LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB."





PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS GREEN

# MAN ON A MISSION

## BRIAN MCLAUGHLIN WORKS TO WIN HEARTS AND MINDS FOR VETS IN ENTERTAINMENT

WRITTEN BY KATIE GRANT

**“**I know it’s a fault. I’m a compulsive volunteer, and almost always there’s not any kind of recognition. So if you’re doing it for the recognition, you’re probably going to be disappointed.” Brian McLaughlin, PGA member, producer, writer, one-time actor and proud Army veteran, has a candor and off-the-cuff humor that’s at once reassuring and refreshing.

In a black vintage Captain America T-shirt, McLaughlin explains, “My parents volunteered for everything. There was a time we were at meetings probably four times a week—the PTA, the planning commission for the city, church things. They

[even] volunteered at the prison. I just do it because I feel like so many people have helped me.” As a Notre Dame grad and MBA from Boston University, McLaughlin was always a go-getter. He learned about discipline and hard work from the Boy Scouts, his time as a college gymnast and from his father, who attended West Point. That drive also came from his stint in the Army, where he reached the rank of Major, with 20 years total in active duty.

McLaughlin says, “People think, ‘How can we help the veterans?’ And to me, veterans generally don’t want that. They’d rather we say, ‘How can veterans help them?’”





Brian McLaughlin enjoys the company of a local family during an assignment as a civilian contractor in Afghanistan.



Brian McLaughlin with producing partner and fellow veteran Penelope Korff

When asked why he chose the military, McLaughlin explains, "Part of it was, of course, it would pay for college. I always thought that would be a good thing for service to country. I thought it was good for me and I did it for fun."

He continues, "I was a business major in college, and I was going to be a finance corps officer. Then between junior and senior year, we went to what we called 'summer camp.' They showed us all the jobs in the Army, had us do these things, and I was like, *this is so much fun.*" He ended up in Special Operations as an Airborne Pathfinder.

McLaughlin is quick to highlight the transferrable skills vets have that make them a perfect fit for the entertainment industry. "They bring good things to the production—strengths like leadership, teamwork, perseverance, responsibility, calmness under pressure, planning and organization, problem solving and confidence."

McLaughlin believes he already possessed those skills even before entering the military. "I think some of it is why people get drawn to the military," he reflects, "because they have those tendencies anyway, like leadership and work ethic and organizational skills and supervisory skills. But the military rein-

forces that."

However McLaughlin doesn't typically lead with his vet experience. "When I got to LA, I didn't think of myself like 'I'm a veteran,'" he recalls. "But then I got involved with Veterans in Film and TV, which is now Veterans in Media and Entertainment. [VME is] a great organization for networking and training, especially if you're fairly junior."

"In addition to the majority [of members] being in LA, they have New York, D.C. and Atlanta branches. So if you're going to shoot something in those locations, then veterans can be a really good resource."

His contributions to VME include securing Peter Berg as a mentor for two veterans. Back when *Lone Survivor*, Berg's true story film based on the book of the same name, was in production, McLaughlin's PGA mentor suggested he reach out to Berg about working on the film. After multiple attempts, McLaughlin realized he wouldn't be hired and instead offered his unsolicited professional advice on accurately filming a few of the scenes. Authenticity was a special priority for him in this case; Erik Kristensen, the basis for the character played by Eric Bana, was a friend of his.

He remembers making recommendations

like, "Please don't have them rappel or fast-rope into an open field where you could just ram a helicopter and have everyone hop out more quickly than having to go down a rope." This garnered a response from Berg saying, "Thank you for these tips. I think we're on the same page." The two established a rapport. After that the director readily agreed to mentor not one, but the top two qualified applicants chosen.

Besides sponsoring a few fellow vets for PGA membership, McLaughlin serves on the Guild's Education and Diversity Committees, organizes volunteers (many of them vets) for the Produced By Conference, and helps recruit members by inviting fellow vets to the Emmy and Oscar watch parties.

He's also an organizer of the Producers Roundtables. Half of the participants at the Roundtable are PGA members, while the other half are vets who are, indeed, vetted to attend. Interested veterans must fill out an application demonstrating their commitment level in the business, complete with an essay question about why they should be chosen.

One of the highlights of McLaughlin's military career that merged his two worlds was acting as Media Production Advisor to General David Petraeus in



Afghanistan, in support of the then-new counterinsurgency movement the General is now widely known for. McLaughlin produced a set of short films to educate and win the hearts and minds of the locals and current active military over there.

"My boss said, 'Go do whatever you think has to be done'" he recalls. "And [my predecessor] was making shorts so that was part of the job already. I just found other stories to tell."

McLaughlin produced a documentary about a woman from the Department of Agriculture who found a way to spend thousands instead of millions of dollars. "She was giving the Afghans what they wanted, instead of what somebody else wanted to give them, and it was turning them to support our cause like crazy. So that was screened for the Department of Agriculture and [the leader] said to the people there, 'You don't have to do what she's doing, but if you don't do what she's doing, you'd better have a better idea.'"

For most of McLaughlin's life, film was just a form of entertainment. "I've always loved going to movies. It seemed like every Saturday we piled in the station wagon with the Smiths across the street, and they'd dump us [kids] off at the theater, and we watched whatever matinee they had going on.

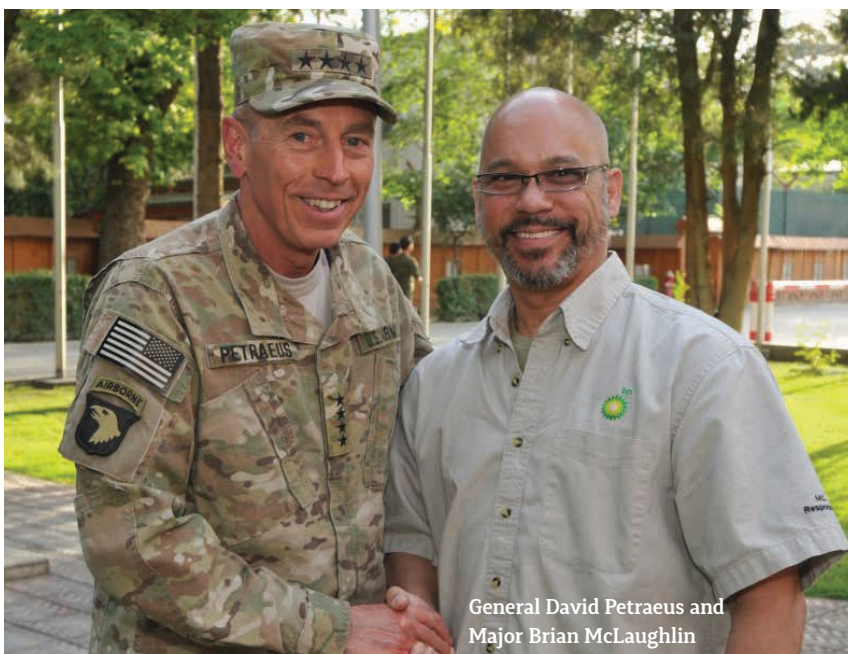
"Here's the irony," he smiles. "My grandmother grew up in the industry. She was an artist, a sculptor, for all her life. I guess she saw a way to actually make money off of sculpture. But none of us [kids] had the slightest bit of interest in what she did in the film industry. I don't think I ever thought to go to set."

Madeline McLaughlin worked on the alien in *Alien* and the eel from *The Deep*, among other props. McLaughlin and his siblings would go see her movies but that's where it ended.

Once out of the Army, McLaughlin moved to Arizona for work in finance. It wasn't until after answering an ad for actors in a local Tucson paper, just for fun, that McLaughlin ended up with an agent. His first gig was on William Shatner's film, *Groom Lake*, and Shatner

himself called McLaughlin in to read. He got the part, but SAG refused to Taft-Hartley him on the grounds of his having no previous experience.

Shatner personally apologized to McLaughlin and kept him on the film anyway, using him every chance he could. Agreeing to be an extra was an easy call. "You mean can I just go spend four days working on a William Shatner movie?" he laughs. "Yeah, I think I can do that."



General David Petraeus and Major Brian McLaughlin

From there McLaughlin got the bug and began studying everything he could about filmmaking. He realized he loved producing the most and although he's dabbled in writing and was a quarter-finalist for the PAGE International Screenwriting Awards, producing is where he feels most at home.

He believes the storytelling process helps veterans in particular. "Some of the [vets] I know have been in plays and particularly plays that let them tell their own stories, or whatever story they want to tell. They talk about how cathartic it is, how therapeutic it is, and how being in that kind of communal environment, working toward a mission, is very similar to what they experienced in the military. But in a way that doesn't involve people

shooting at you, generally," he deadpans. "Unless it's a really bad play."

Early on, McLaughlin's film community included none other than Roger Corman, who sponsored McLaughlin for PGA membership. "Patrick Roddy had worked for Roger out of college, so he sent Roger the first two films I produced and he directed. Roger loved them and said, 'These are better than my films.' One was made for \$70,000, and he said, 'Seems like a three

to five million dollar film,' which was high praise. That was *Good Boy*."

McLaughlin met Corman at the very first Produced By Conference in 2009 and Corman remembered his film. They stayed in touch and, "When it came time for sponsorship of my membership, I just emailed him."

McLaughlin has now produced four features and has seven in development with his company, Emerald Elephant. He continues to pay it forward, creating opportunities for veterans and young filmmakers alike—mentoring, volunteering and organizing whenever he can. As McLaughlin says, "It's so great to be involved in everything, instead of just involved in nothing." ■



COLORADO COLLEGE

# Bulletin

[ Navigating the Immigration System  
in Southern Georgia, p. 20 ]

SUMMER 2018





# The Road to Writing Is Not Always Paved

By Katie Grant '92

Plenty of writers have come out of CC, but not all of them have meant to become authors. For these three award-winning and best-selling alumni authors, writing led them each down a unique path of rich and rewarding lives whether they sought it out or not.

Colorado College has many alumni, staff, and faculty authors, including Carola Lovering '11 whose June 2018 debut novel from Simon & Schuster, "Tell Me Lies," has been named a Best Book of the Summer by multiple media publications, including *Parade*, Literary Hub, and Refinery29. To learn more about "Tell Me Lies," and other books recently published by CC authors, check out our regular feature, "O the Bookshelf" (see pages 30-31).



John Shors '91



## The Road Strategically Traveled

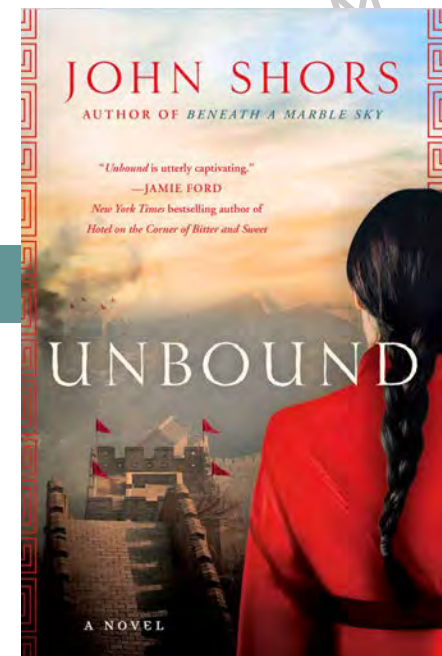
**John Shors '91** knew he wanted to write novels when he showed up at CC in the fall of 1987. It's actually one of the reasons he chose Colorado College. "It seemed to me that the block system would be a really good fit in terms of the best environment for me to study English and creative writing, and just focus on developing skills that I knew I would need to become a successful novelist," he says.

As a now multiple *New York Times* best-selling, award-winning author with his seventh novel, "Unbound," out this year, that notion turned out

to be true. Shors' path from CC to successful author was certainly mapped out and happened with quite a bit of strategic planning on his part.

The only missing piece that he stumbled upon at CC was travel. After spending a semester abroad his junior year in the South Pacific, visiting five different countries, he left thinking, "I want to travel the world and I want to write novels and I need to figure out a way to make that work." That's when the long game of strategy kicked in for Shors to find the "kind of road that [he] would walk" to become an author.

After graduation, Shors flew to Japan with his best friend from CC to teach English. After a couple of years, they saved up enough to backpack around Southeast Asia and he fell in love with that area. He returned to his home in Iowa and "became a newspaper reporter because I knew that I had to hone my writing skills if I had any chance to be a successful novelist." He won awards there and then moved on to work in the world of public relations because, again, he "realized early on that in order to be successful or have a chance at success, that I would have to understand advertising and marketing."



Strategic move No. 2 turned out to be another boon as he helped launch GroundFloor Media, which he says is now one of the largest public relations agencies in Colorado. He left understanding "the best ways to promote a project or product. And those were the skills that I was able to apply to help me successfully launch my first novel."

Now, all Shors needed was his first story. He set out to travel around Asia again, this time with his wife, looking for his novel. Once they landed at the Taj Mahal and Shors heard the love story that inspired that building, he knew he'd found his story. That story turned out to be the international bestseller, "Beneath a Marble Sky," which is now being made into a television mini-series. And that process became his MO for finding his next six novels. "[I] identify a unique place that hasn't been written about, travel there, get to know it, find a story that's set there, and then dedicate myself to bringing that story back to life on the page."

When asked how he created such a strategic business plan for his creative success from the grounds of CC where a broad liberal arts education reigns, he says having great professors and small classes taught him how to self-advocate, gain confidence, and be aggressive. "My education at CC helped to greatly improve my non-academic skills. These life skills were crucial to my success, as they helped me evolve as a person and an entrepreneur."

Up next for Shors is a trilogy of young adult science fiction novels he's 70 percent of the way through. He's also busy promoting "Unbound" in both the U.S. and China since his latest bestseller is set along the Great Wall. As he's done with his other novels, Shors is working on a way to give back with "Unbound," and create an avenue for its success to benefit a local charity. That's just the kind of road he prefers to walk.



## The Road Accidentally Traveled

“Ruth [Barton] was an enormous influence on me. She was the first person who told me that I could be a writer,” says **Michael Nava** ’76. The author of the Henry Rios mystery novels, six-time Lambda Literary Award winner, and recipient of the Bill Whitehead Award for Lifetime Achievement in LGBT Literature sees his time at Colorado College as the reason he’s been a successful writer. His first class at CC was creative writing with the English professor, and that’s when he started writing poetry.

“I was this poor Chicano kid from a very poor family and the idea that I could be an artist, that was for rich white people,” says Nava. “But [Ruth] said, ‘No.’ She said, ‘You’re a very talented writer and if that’s what you want to do, you can do it.’ I needed permission and she gave it to me.”

Nava went on to win the Bridge Award for poetry three out of his four years at CC, and majored in history, which he’s always been fascinated with, and then attended Stanford Law. At law school the “poetry kind of dried up,” he says, because “I think I knew too much. Every time I’d sit down to write a poem I had like 500 years of Anglo-American tradition on my shoulders. And it got to be kind of intimidating, frankly.”

Nava says he hated law school and nearly dropped out but loved being a lawyer. He eventually got to practice the best parts of the law, which “are sort of the thinking and the researching and the writing without having to deal with clients or the business aspects of it.” Nava wrote opinions for judges within the California Courts of Appeal. “The last 15 years [of my career] I was at the California Supreme Court where I worked for Carlos Moreno, one of the justices. And I ended up working on death penalty appeals.”

For Nava, it was a 9-to-5 job that gave him time to write nine novels, one non-fiction book, and numerous essays and short stories. His first book was rejected 13 times

until a “little publisher of gay books in Boston published it ... And it got reviewed in the *New York Times*.” He hadn’t planned on being a mystery writer but that publisher asked if he could write another one and then an agent called and said he’d represent him, “but you have to keep writing these mysteries.” So Nava’s path was set and “kind of serendipitous.”

Nava now owns the rights to his novels and is going back to rewrite them as historical fiction because, as he says, “This is my time to flesh out the record and to try and get it right.” He’s also covering the AIDS crisis in 1984 San Francisco in a new novel, “Carved in Bone,” which will come out next year, because “somehow I missed it when I was writing the original series.”

There’s a line from his first novel titled “Lay Your Sleeping Head” that he rewrote in 2016, where the main character, Henry Rios, realizes the

potential client standing in his office is also gay and that “it was possible to lower our shields and breathe.”

When asked if he feels like the shields of gay men are starting to lower right now or if they still need to be at the ready, he says, “Well, our world is sadly in transition again. If you’d asked me this question before November 8, 2016, I would have said, life’s a lot easier for younger gay people. And I think that’s still true, although it depends upon where you live. But, the future is uncertain because all gains can be lost. And we live in a time when bigotry of all sorts has been empowered.”

Nava actually started writing “Carved in Bone,” also set in “another dark time with another Republican administration,” the day after the election. “I think my motivation for writing it was just to remind myself, and other people, that we’ve had very dark times and we’ve survived them.”

Nava’s original work definitely helped others during the dark days of AIDS. He recalls, “I would get lots of letters from other gay men who would ... thank me for representing what life was like in those days.” And he also inspired other Latinos who thanked him “for doing a fictional representation of a Latino man who was a professional and educated [but] who was not a stereotype.” He adds, “These kids are like me, first-generation college, and they just need to know it can be done.”

When probed about his own literary idols and inspirations, Nava says most of the writers he really admires are poets. “Poetry was my first love. ... It’s why most of the titles of my novels are derived from some line of poetry or other. ... But in terms of writing, I’ve always liked writers who write very clear, unadorned prose. So, someone like George Orwell or the Italian writer Natalia Ginzburg. Or Jean Stafford, the short story writer.”

Nava’s latest project is turning the first Henry Rios novel, “Lay Your Sleeping Head,” into a 24-hour podcast. “Basically I’m producing a theatrical event, so I had to adapt the book into scripts, which was not as simple as just writing out dialogue. I’ve actually had to rewrite the dialogue.” He’s also hired actors, a director, a composer to write original music, a sound engineer, and a studio to record it all. “It’s been very exciting, kind of overwhelming,” he says. “I think it could be great.”

Nava’s protagonist, Henry Rios, “has always been involved in these issues of race and gender and sexual orientation and always on the receiving end of bigotry. And he’s not a victim, but it’s the study of how a sensitive and decent human being deals with these forces and how he tries to live his life in an honorable way.”

It’s a road Michael Nava has been down himself and he hopes his books become his legacy that share the truth in that experience.



Michael Nava ’76





Jen Sincero '87

## The Road Reluctantly Traveled

Jen Sincero '87 was always a badass, she just didn't know it for a while. The *New York Times* best-selling author of "You Are a Badass," "You Are a Badass at Making Money," "The Straight Girls Guide to Sleeping With Chicks," and "Don't Sleep With Your Drummer," says she's written all of her first drafts in 3½ weeks. "I keep trying to give myself more time, and then, if I give myself two months, I spend the first four and a half weeks just screwing around, playing with my lip, and then I start writing. It's weird. It's freaky."

Sincero didn't know what she wanted to do when she got to CC; she just knew she wanted to attend. "First of all, I didn't get in to CC. I *talked* my way in," she says. "I called them to see how I could get off the wait list, and, unbeknownst to me, they put me on the phone with the dean of admission and we had a lovely hilarious chat." That badass move got her accepted.

Despite not knowing what she wanted to do, Sincero did end up majoring in English and writing. Professor James Yaffe was "a very important and influential teacher" for her. "He was such a great professor and was so encouraging to me," she says. "I thought I sucked at writing, but he always did a cartwheel every time I wrote something."

She spent her time post CC working various jobs like waiting tables at Friendly's, driving cars for Avis Rent-A-Car, working at a deli in Cape Cod and, eventually, publishing two books. But there was never any real financial success to match her creative success. She also spent time in rock bands, singing and playing guitar, living in places she always wanted to live — even spent a year in Barcelona with a bunch of CC friends.

But one thing Sincero always had was her sense of humor. She was admittedly the

## It's a Book Club on the Block Plan!

The Alumni Association Board Engagement Committee, in conjunction with the Office of Alumni and Family Relations, hosts an online book club through Goodreads. Each quarter, CC alumni and parents are invited to read and discuss a book by a CC author, CC faculty member, or visiting speaker. Participants have four to six weeks to read each book, followed by a three-and-a-half-week-long online discussion — the length of a class on the Block Plan. Upcoming selections are:

### Aug. 27-Sept. 19, 2018:

"Radical Survivor: One Woman's Path Through Life, Love, and Uncharted Tragedy" by Nancy Saltzman '74

### Oct. 22-Nov. 14, 2018:

"You Are a Badass: How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life" by Jen Sincero '87

### March 25-April 17, 2019:

"And Silent Left the Place" by Elizabeth (Betty) Bruce '74

To join, visit the Goodreads website and create an account. Once you have an account, request to join the Colorado College Alumni Book Club. You'll have access to the group once approved. Members are responsible for obtaining their own copy of the book.

If you would like your book to be considered for the CC Alumni Book Club, go to [www.coloradocollege.edu/alumniauthors](http://www.coloradocollege.edu/alumniauthors). Books are curated by the AAB and Alumni Office.

class clown in high school and comes from a "very funny family." "I mean, our dinner table was kind of like a writer's room. There are four kids in my family. My mom was really funny and we were always just trying to outdo each other. So I got really skilled at getting the fast one-liner in there. It was very competitive, very cutthroat."

When she got sick of living on a shoestring in her 40s, Sincero took to self-help books, started meditating, and taking all the advice to heart to finally give "myself permission to focus on making money." She hired a coach to help her get going who suggested she start an online business helping entrepreneurs write book proposals, something she'd already done successfully for herself. And it was the reward of helping these executives change their lives that she loved the most, so she became a coach.

After accruing enough stories of people wishing their lives were different, Sincero wondered why no one had ever written a funny self-help book to get people unstuck. Hence, "You Are a Badass" was born, although a bit reluctantly.

"I am definitely not one of those writers who has to write and has felt called to it, and can't rest, and process all of my things through writing," she says. "I actually am very reluctant and rather

grouchy about the writing process and have to totally force myself to do it."

Even so, Sincero says there are more "Badass" books to come and she's now working on two comedy projects — a TV show and a movie script — so she can "hang out with the people I love and laugh my ass off."

When pressed for a question no one's ever asked that she wishes they would, Sincero says, "As woo-woo as it sounds, we are our own worst enemies and we trap ourselves by falling prey to the beliefs that aren't doing any good. So I think anybody who's feeling stuck really has to step back and look at how they're thinking. There are full-blown idiots who are rich and happy and in successful relationships. So, if they can do it, so can you. I really just think it's important to stop pretending you can't have what you want."

The knowledge Sincero now shares with others through her books may just have started back when she was waitlisted for CC: "It sounds super corny but going to Colorado College was a huge life-changer for me. That experience of talking my way in really taught me to not sit around and wait. You gotta get in there and hustle. It also provided me with lifelong friends and that is everything to me."





**COLORADO COLLEGE**

# Bulletin

[ Professor Emeritus William “Bill” Hochman,  
1922–2019, p. 12 ]

SPRING 2019





# Sustaining Hope

Students leave COP24 determined to be part of the solution to climate change

By **Katie Grant '92**

Photos by **Adam Holliday '19**

“The struggle to combat climate change, it’s a very international issue that requires a lot of cooperation,” says **Adam Holliday '19**. “There are a lot of countries with different agendas that are on different pages. They have different technologies, different backgrounds, so it’s really all finding a way to come together to solve this giant issue that affects everybody.”

Holliday was one of the nine hand-selected, predominantly economics majors that Professor Mark Smith took to Katowice, Poland, for the COP24 — the informal name for the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. “The main objective of the Polish Presidency at COP24,” explains the COP’s website, “is to adopt a decision ensuring full implementation of the Paris Agreement.”

Smith’s class spent two weeks during Block 4 in December 2018 at the conference and got to see the world wade through the process of coming together on climate change firsthand.

“Mark really wanted students who were going to fully engage, because he went through a lot of effort to get the badges to go to the COP,” says Holliday of the application process the student attendees had to go through. “That’s not something that they just give out. So he really had to pull strings and knock on doors to get us in a position where we could go and he just wanted to be sure that we were the type of students that would take advantage of that opportunity.”

And take advantage they did. Each student was tasked with writing a paper on a pre-chosen topic for the COP24 and a community project. They met once a week during Blocks 1-3 to prepare for the intensely mental and emotional experience of showing up for 12-hour days packed with events and negotiations in cold, “sad,” and soot-soaked Katowice.

Most of them already plan on a life working toward sustainability, be it through construction, water management, or climate economics. **Beau Burns '19** says, “I really do think it’s the most pressing issue of our time.”





"I'm interested in water markets," Burns adds, but not everyone in Katowice was. "Water markets and pricing mechanisms and these economic terms for how to manage the scarce resource was met with a lot of ... I wouldn't call it aggression, but that was maybe perceived as evil ... they were talking about the Cape Town water crisis and I would ask a question. 'Well was there a pricing mechanism? Have they thought about markets as the solution?' And that was perceived poorly. People think you're talking about privatizing access to water."

“Just hearing from different people who are from an entirely different part of the world than I am, and facing so many different types of adversity from climate change than I could imagine having with my life here, It was really eye-opening ...”

Paige Shetty '19 is currently a greenhouse gas inventory intern at CC, helping track the way to the college's goal of being carbon neutral by 2020. "I want to be working toward climate change solutions and sustainable society through an economics and a capital market lens," she says. For her, attending COP24 gave her an appreciation for learning about the differences across the world and how others experience climate change.

"Just hearing from different people who are from an entirely different part of the world than I am, and facing so many different types of adversity from climate change than I could imagine having with my life here," she says. "It was really eye-opening, and I think it got me a lot more engaged in the topic that I was looking at, and just what my role would be in finding solutions for climate change."

The focus for **Riley Hutchings '19** is on indigenous peoples. She says of COP24, "The most moving part was that I went to a lot of panels by indigenous speakers. And one of them talked about how the way the climate regime and the UNFCCC had approached climate change is kind of like paralleling the colonial mindset that people took when they committed genocide upon indigenous peoples in the U.S."

"So, for example, there's a program called REDD+ and reducing emissions from forest degradation. And it essentially puts a price on a unit of forest, and ... if you do that, if you monetize a forest, then you're just breaking the relationship with the land, which is exactly what causes climate change in the first place."

Still, Hutchings' resolve has been firmed since the experience. "I think there's still reason to fight it as hard as we can even if there isn't going to be a crazy amount of change."

Holliday, who also served as the group's photographer, followed fellow students to their side events. "They had some really interesting events on sustainable construction, and it was amazing to see all of this technology that exists and is being used. Some of it, I didn't even think it was possible that that was already in existence. There was one example, in Norway specifically, how they already had a zero emission construction site, where they were building a large structure, and all of the equipment that they were using was electric."

Also in attendance were Provost Alan Townsend, Sustainability Director Ian Johnson, Board of Trustees members **Marc St John '80** and **Kishen Mangat '96** — and President Jill Tiefenthaler, whose presence made a big impression on students and alumni alike of how important combating climate change is to CC.

St John, currently secretary of the CC Board of Trustees, raised his hand at a meeting when asked who would like to attend COP24 with the students. St John is from Colorado but resides in England.

"I think this generation has handed a pretty lethal cocktail to the next generation... I really think there's a responsibility for our generation to try to do something. I mean, we've already kind of ruined it. It's really up to our children."

## CALLING CC TIGERS: A Request and an Opportunity

- **THE REQUEST:** Professor of Economics Mark Smith is seeking to identify those with CC connections who are working in the climate change/renewable energy/sustainability arena. Please contact him at [msmith@coloradocollege.edu](mailto:msmith@coloradocollege.edu) to let him know of your work and area of interest. He will invite you to join the Climate Change Professionals group within Tiger Link, CC's professional networking platform.
- **THE OPPORTUNITY:** CC is now an accredited observer organization with the UNFCCC. Last year, three alumni joined the CC delegation at COP24. This year COP25 is Dec. 3-13 in Santiago, Chile. Smith has the ability to obtain a badge for a similar number of alumni for COP25. Contact him if you are interested in attending, and he will send you more information. ■

COLORADO COLLEGE

# Bulletin

[ A Train of Thought Across  
America, p. 14 ]

WINTER 2018







CC Track and Field athletes offer clinics for local middle school students, teaching high jump, hurdle, relay, and more.

## PAYING IT BACKWARD

### To CC Athletes, Sports Is Not Just a Game

“Soccer’s always been a thing in my life, since I was a little kid, so having the opportunity to keep that stoke alive ... for kids ... it’s like getting back to my roots,” says **Alexander Makic '19**. “[Soccer] got me here so I don’t see why not to give back.”

A physics major with an emphasis in environmental science, Makic plays center back on the men’s soccer team and is just one of the many athletes at CC who participates in the Department of Athletics’ community outreach and engagement programs. For men’s soccer, that means holding annual free soccer clinics for at-risk youth with the Southeast Springs Soccer Initiative.

**Henry Schuler '19**, the men’s soccer captain, says, “The biggest impact ... is being that example of what a young child’s life can turn into and what that next step can be and how that process can work. Because

for kids in general, and specifically [these SeSSI] kids, I think the future is pretty unsure and can be ... clouded in terms of how you get there and what it means to get there and, even, what that is.”

According to the National Collegiate Athletic Association’s website, “Giving back to the community is important to many NCAA student-athletes, whether involvement occurs on their own or within the team setting.” And that is indeed the case at CC. Jessica Bennett, CC’s director of athletics marketing, says, “I think the majority of our student athletes realize the importance [of being involved] and engaged in the community they’re living in. I think they realize that they can make an impact.”

“I find myself incredibly fortunate to work with such amazing student athletes,” she adds. “Their answer

is always ‘yes.’ I do not have to beg anyone. I don’t have to search very far. I can send these opportunities to some student athletes and the answer is, ‘Yes, absolutely. When do you want me there? When can I go? When can I start?’”

The range of projects and nonprofits that the athletes support vary widely. Outreach includes the women’s basketball team’s involvement with the Ronald McDonald House, men’s basketball’s work with Operation TBI (traumatic brain injury) Freedom, and women’s soccer’s focus on the Special Olympics, to name a few. The CC Student Athlete Advisory Committee also hosts a fundraiser called Parents Night Out four times a year that offers local parents the opportunity to drop their kids off to spend an evening on campus with CC athletes playing sports and board games.





CC Men's Soccer hosts annual free soccer clinics for at-risk youth through the Southeast Springs Soccer Initiative.

**Quin Gattley '19**, a track & field hurdler majoring in international political economy, describes clinics his team hosts for local middle school students, saying the younger athletes come to campus for an afternoon when the CC practice is over, and the team sets up five or six stations. The students circulate around the stations and learn the basics. "We usually have a high jump drill, a hurdle drill, and a plyometric drill for students to get some jumping practice in. There's also a relay and a starting block drill," he says.

"The most rewarding thing to see," says **Liza Huschle '19**, track and field member and co-chair of the Community Outreach Committee on the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, "is how much more comfortable the kids are at the end of their shift ... compared to the beginning. The confidence they gain from mastering the skills we coach is evident in the way they carry themselves as they leave the station.

"Seeing their smiles and excitement about learning a new skill makes me excited for their potential athletic careers. That satisfaction and pride we get from mastering something new is unparalleled. And it's so exciting to see someone experience that for the first time."

The giving also takes place at the coach level. Scott Palguta, head men's soccer coach, explains an upcoming opportunity with **Keith Drury '13**. "Drury was a 4-year men's soccer player and currently works for a really great organization — Soccer Without Borders — that uses soccer as a vehicle to address critical issues facing young people in underserved communities throughout the world. At the end of the academic year,

our program plans to donate some of our used equipment to the SWB organization. We will also ask the players to donate any personal soccer gear they may not need anymore."

**Alex Nichols '07**, assistant coach of the cross country/track and field teams, says, "When I was a student at CC, I did volunteer work with the cross country team at Care and Share Food Bank. We sorted food donations and prepared deliveries. Most of the team was there participating and we created a competition to see who could sort and label the most cans of food. It was a fun team activity that felt more like team building than service."

These student athletes value the benefits of athletics that go beyond physical activity, such as goal setting, accountability, teamwork, leadership, problem-solving skills, and work ethic. They are comfortable acting as role models for the local youth and see the rewards of passing these skills on.

**Henry Baldwin '19**, a high jumper on the track and field team and an English major on the creative writing track, has seen the impact from the high-jump station at his team's clinics. "There'll be one kid who can jump pretty well. Then, all of a sudden, they're hooked. You only have five minutes per station and they're trying to get as many jumps in before they have to go to another station because it's addicting.

"I also think it's just good that, as a team, we're making bonds within the community and we're interacting with the people of the town that we live in all year."



PHOTO: COURTESY SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

## HONORING THE "WINNINGEST COLLEGE FOOTBALL COACH EVER"

**John Gagliardi '49**, owner of more coaching wins than anyone else in college football history, died Oct. 7 in St. Cloud, Minnesota, at age 91.

John's coaching career started when his football coach at Trinidad (Colorado) High School was drafted into World War II, and his teammates asked him to fill in. He wound up coaching there for four years, until St. Mary's High School in Colorado Springs offered him its coaching job — and free tuition to CC.

After graduating he moved to Montana, where he coached for four years at Carroll College before joining St. John's University in 1953. He coached there until retiring in 2012. In between, John accumulated five undefeated seasons and four Division III national titles. And notably, he never cut a player, often keeping nearly 200 young men on his roster. He never allowed tackling or blew a whistle during practices. And his one basic team rule was "the Golden Rule." He was elected to the CC Athletic Hall of Fame in 2004.

John was predeceased by a son, Joseph. His survivors include his wife, Peggy; children Nancy Little, Gina Benson, John and Jimmy Gagliardi; 19 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.