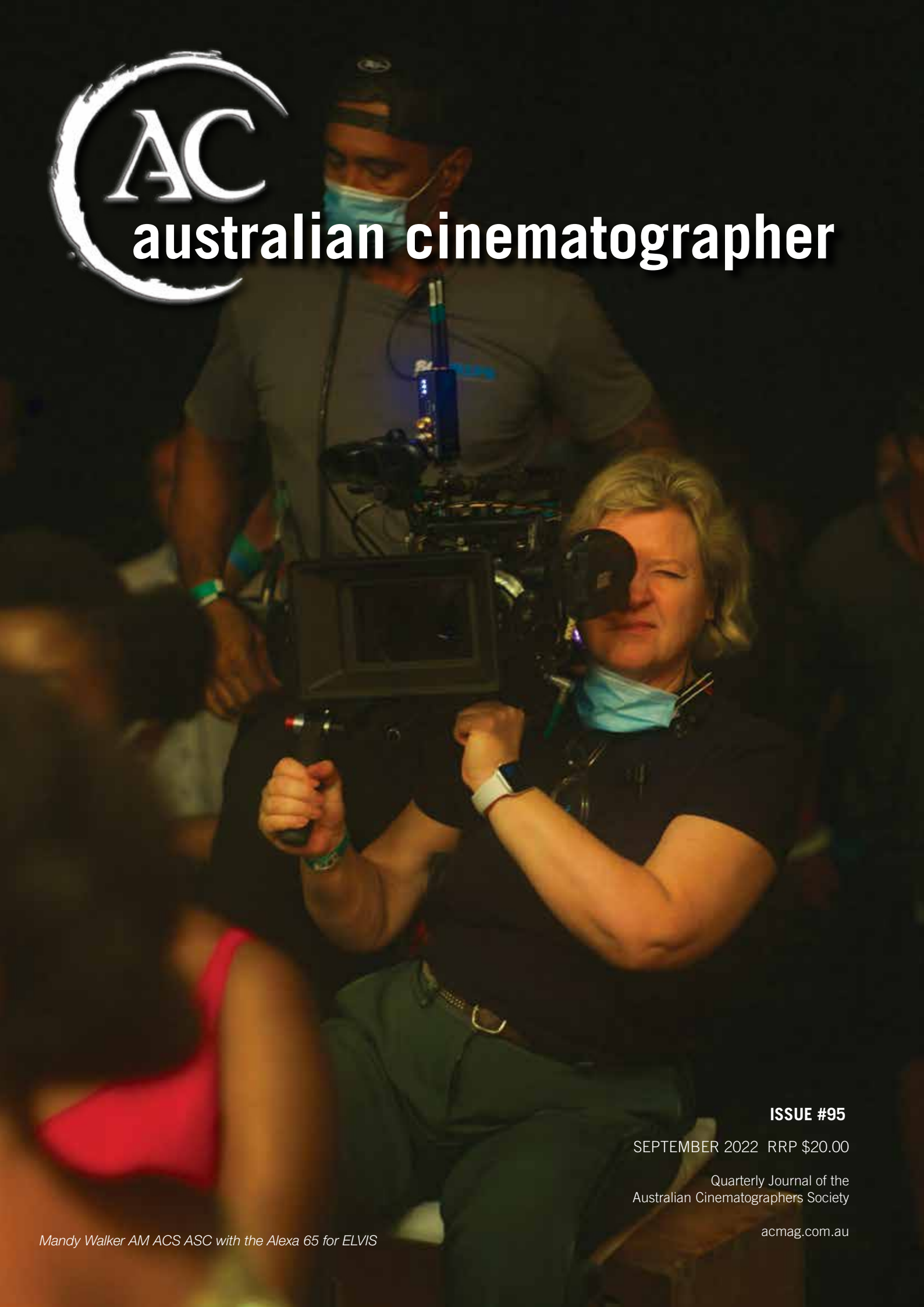




australian cinematographer



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Mandy Walker AM ACS ASC with the Alexa 65 for ELVIS

THE TERMINAL LIST

SHOT ON
SUMMILUX-C
AND
SUMMICRON-C



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FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to issue #95 of the Australian Cinematographer Magazine, and my first issue as Editor.

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which I work and pay my respects to Indigenous Elders past, present and emerging. This continent always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

It's a privilege to be handed the Editorial baton and I'd like to acknowledge departing Editor James Cunningham for his many years of hard work and dedication.

If you don't know me, I've spent the last 8 years on sets in and around Melbourne (with a few trips across state lines), starting as a Production Assistant before I very quickly found my passion within the camera department. I'm sure I'm not alone when I say that we have some of the best crews in the world in Australia, and though the conditions of our work can often be gruelling it's the people we surround ourselves with that make working in this industry worth it.

This magazine is a wonderful platform for recognising the talent in this country and I'm so excited to be able to bring new and diverse voices to the table. Celebrating the achievements of our peers is not only important, but necessary, and I look forward to celebrating with you all.

Stay tuned.

Sarah Jo Fraser

Editor

Australian Cinematographer Magazine

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members, sponsors and friends,

A very warm welcome to our new AC Magazine Editor Sarah Jo Fraser - welcome aboard and I look forward to seeing your work.

At the recent launch of A WIDER LENS report, I had the honour of being the first in the ACS to welcome guests and members using the newly drafted ACS First Nations Greeting:

The Australian Cinematographers Society wish to acknowledge First Nations Peoples and their unceded Lands on which we live and work. We celebrate the continuing links Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have as original custodians, and recognise their rights, richness of culture and ongoing connection to Knowledge, Stories and Country - Land, Seas and Sky.

As storytellers, we commit to continuing conversations and creating a path to a deeper recognition for First Nations Heritage. Always Was, Always Will Be.

These words were carefully crafted by a team lead by the inimitable Murray Lui for use at all ACS events and panels and I encourage everyone to do so.

The A WIDER LENS report was successfully launched on 28th July in front of a very engaged live audience and global streaming audience. Esteemed guest speakers included Leah Purcell AM, Ray Martin AM and Dr Amanda Coles.

The report received extensive general and trade press coverage with one of our members writing, "This report is one of the important things the Society has ever done." Screen industry stake holders are now in contact to find ways to leverage our work with their programs.

Last but certainly not least, a CREDIT MAKER ACS placement scheme reminder. I urge those shooting drama series to consider taking on a Credit Maker cinematographer to mentor. The production gets an experienced second DOP on at no cost to the production.

Stay safe and well everyone,

Erika Addis

National President

Australian Cinematographers Society

ACS AT THE ICS



Caption to come - PHOTO tbc

In early June this year ACS President Erika Addis and Vice President Andrew Hyde jetted off to Los Angeles to attend the International Cinematography Summit on behalf of the Australian Cinematographers Society. This was a chance for the society to touch base with Cinematographers and Societies from all corners of the world, coming together to engage in presentations on topics such as immersive technologies, virtual production, and HDR shooting.

The ACS was delighted to preview their world-first new report with attendees at the summit, 'A Wider Lens: Australian Camera Workforce Development and Diversity'. This ground-breaking look into the Australian Camera Department workforce was commissioned by the ACS in partnership with Deakin University and reveals new and critical statistics about the lack of gender, racial and other diversity in the film industry, focusing on camera departments. Key recommendations in the report will be pivotal to improving equity and mental health industry wide.

The presentation garnered strong interest from attendees, and it was clear that the report was a substantial contribution to the summit. Finnish Society of Cinematographers President Matti Eerikäinen reflected, "this extremely detailed report should work as the wake-up call for everyone working in the business. This is something everyone should be aware of

and consider as we continue our work together toward equality, and a positive future of filmmaking."

The final report was launched globally and Australia-wide in July, and the next challenge is to engage industry partners in developing actions

plans to implement the extensive recommendations. It's anticipated the newly installed Federal Minister for the Arts and Industry will look closely at the recommendations.

The report is available to download on the ACS website. Photos provided by Andrew Hyde and Erika Addis.

WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

80%
MEN

18%
WOMEN

2%
TRANS/GENDER
DIVERSE

68%
AGED 35+

8% IDENTIFY AS A PERSON
WITH A DISABILITY

83%
HETEROSEXUAL
/STRAIGHT

17%
IDENTIFY AS LGTBQ+

63%
ANGLO-CELTIC

36%
EUROPEAN

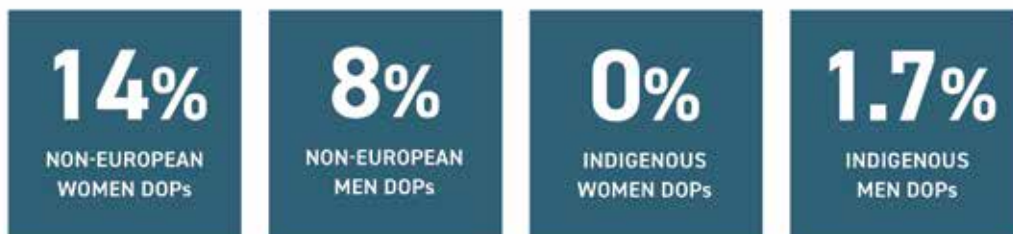
13%
NON-EUROPEAN

2%
INDIGENOUS¹

IN FOCUS: DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

1 KEY FINDING: There is a serious diversity deficit in the leadership of film and television camera departments in Australia.

Of the DOPs in the ACS workforce survey data:



7 KEY FINDING: Men experience substantially longer careers as directors of photography than women – and thus more earning potential in this key creative leadership role over the course of their professional lives.

% of DOPs who have worked in low-to-medium budget features in Australian television drama for more than 15 years:

53%
MEN

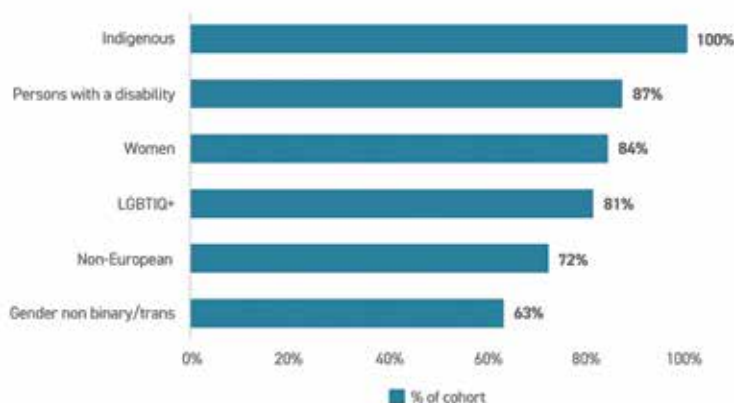
27%
WOMEN



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAIN COURSE FILMS

15 KEY FINDING: The majority of camera professionals from equity-seeking groups fear negative career impacts as a consequence of reporting bullying/harassment and/or discrimination.

Percentage of respondents who worry that reporting instances of workplace bullying/harassment and/or discrimination have had, or may have, a negative impact on my career





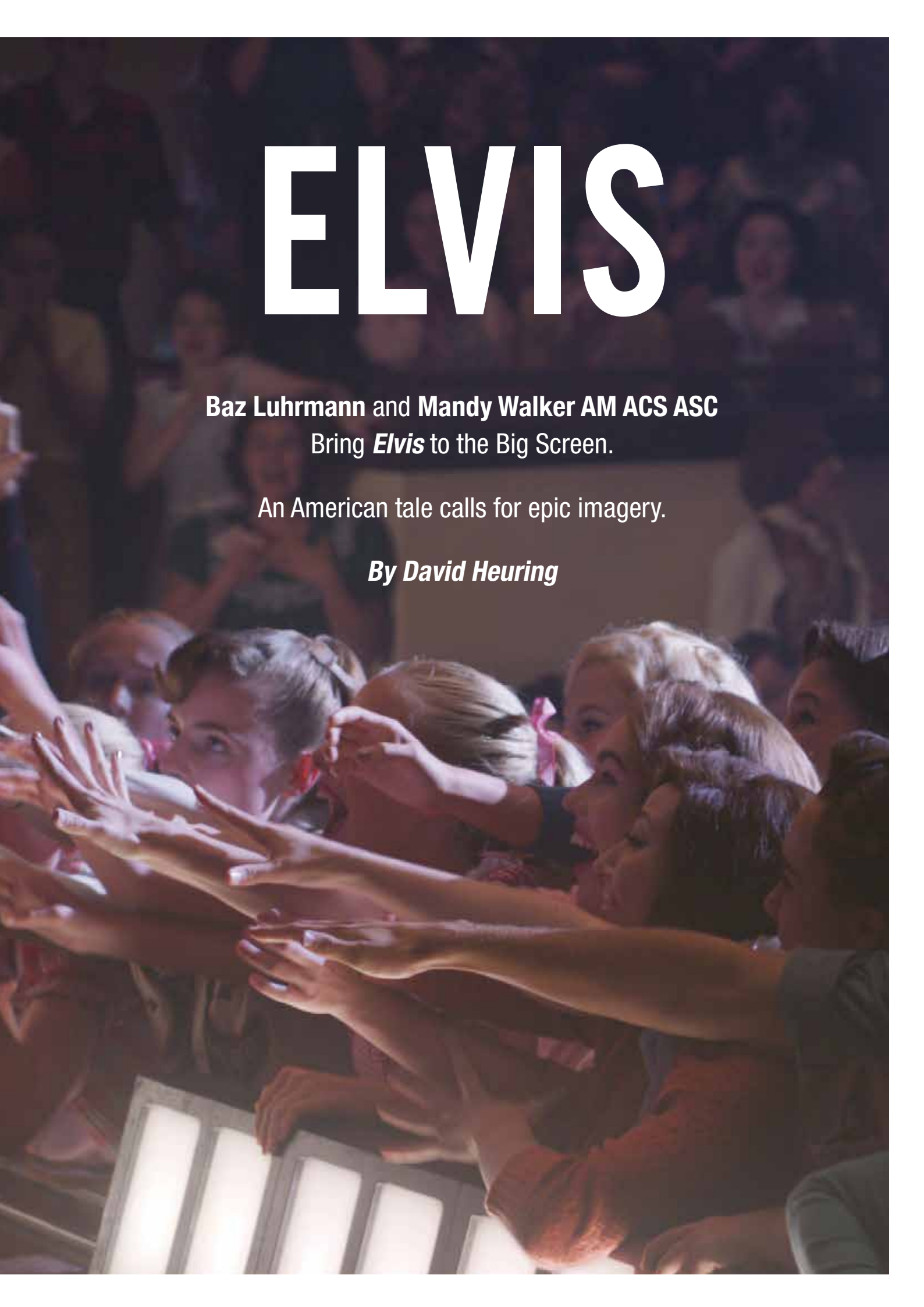
AUSTIN BUTLER as *Elvis* - PHOTO Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

ELVIS

Baz Luhrmann and **Mandy Walker AM ACS ASC**
Bring *Elvis* to the Big Screen.

An American tale calls for epic imagery.

By David Heuring





YOLA as Sister Rosetta Tharpe - PHOTO Kane Skennar

Baz Luhrmann's talent for blending music, stage and cinema is obvious throughout his oeuvre – most obviously in 2001's *Moulin Rouge!*, which earned Australian Film Institute, Oscar and BAFTA nominations for best picture. This time around, Luhrmann recreated the career arc of Elvis Presley, from a dirt-poor family to the biggest star in the world. This uniquely American tale stars Austin Butler as Elvis and Tom Hanks and his Svengali manager Col. Tom Parker.

“We shot this film 100 percent in Australia, which is amazing,” says director of photography Mandy Walker AM, ASC, ACS. ***“Baz really wanted to support the local industry. If we had shot in Memphis or Vegas, it’s completely changed. We did use some stock footage. But it was a great thing to be in Australia, with Australian crews – the art department, costume, makeup, postproduction, and everybody on my team. Kudos to them for stepping up – anything was achievable.”***

Walker was at the camera for Luhrmann's 2008 feature *Australia*, as well as Niki Caro's *Mulan*, Theodore Melfi's *Hidden Figures*, and Hany Abu-Assad's *The Mountain Between Us*. A Melbourne, Australia native who studied early on with John Flaus, she was recently made a Member of the Order of Australia. Her approach to Elvis – her first major feature-film musical – began with extensive research into the rich library of reference footage, and eventually led to the recreation of lighting and shooting styles for iconic performances, even down to particular shots, camera moves, angles and edits. The prep period lasted nearly four months, and led to efficiencies once shooting began, and often helped obviate the need for

time-consuming and expensive visual effects.

“It’s in the combination of the photography, the art direction, the performance of course, the costume design, the hair, the makeup,” she says. ***“Every tiny element – the way the camera moves, the number of cameras, which cranes we have. The visual language is very particularly nuanced and specifically done. Baz has the film in his head. It’s a matter of us getting together and reproducing it on the screen.”***

**“Baz has the film in his head.
It’s a matter of us getting
together and reproducing
it on the screen.”**

“We all just keep meeting and communicating, and eventually the ideas meld,” she says. ***“Baz creates a harmony among the departments so we’re all on the same page. And by the time we shoot, it goes pretty quickly – 91 days for such a big film. We could do that because we were exceptionally well prepared.”***

Another key collaborator was producer Catherine Martin, Luhrmann's wife and a four-time Oscar winner whose contributions also include costumes (more than 9000 in this case), set and overall production design.

“Baz obviously has a very strong sense of how he wants things to look,” agrees Martin. ***“He’s a very***



*Director Writer Producer BAZ LUHRMANN, OLIVIA DEJONGE and AUSTIN BUTLER
on the set of Warner Bros. Pictures' drama "ELVIS" - PHOTO Kane Skennar*



Mandy Walker ACS ASC - PHOTO Ruby Bell

good storyteller and collaborator, and he is good at describing what he wants. We all work very openly together as a team. It's both a technical and an artistic process, with lots of ideas brought to the table. It's a constant dialogue of how to make things work, and to make them look the way Baz wants them. The relationships are at the heart of it. Baz is incredibly serious and really gets jazzed, and Mandy is sensitive and smart and has a sense of humor. Also, it's really nice to have another woman in a really important creative position. Our movies have always been strong that way."

"We didn't want a standard biopic - nothing ordinary. The camera was going to fly. The concerts would be an experience for the audience."

"Epic" was a watchword on the project.

"Baz told me very early on that it's an epic story," says Walker. "It's important historically because of the strong influence Elvis had on American culture and in the world. And we also wanted to express that Elvis himself was strongly affected by American culture. We wanted to express those two ideas, and they were always in the back of my mind. We didn't want a standard biopic – nothing ordinary. The camera was going to fly. The concerts would be an

experience for the audience. It's a film for the big screen, with vision, music, sound and texture – everything. It's epic. And that's why I went for 65 mil and the 2.4:1 aspect ratio."

In some cases, rather than reminding people of how certain performances play on television, the filmmakers wanted to deliver a feeling of having actually been present at the event. For more well-known performances like the 1958 NBC "comeback" special in Las Vegas, the task was closer to reproduction, but with the added grandeur of the big screen.

Walker notes that even in performances experienced on small televisions in mid-'60s homes, Elvis shone through. *"He is impressive and connecting with a very small audience, and you see that he never does anything small. He is fearless and charming, with amazing personal charisma."*

"Because there is existing footage that people are familiar with, we wanted to reproduce that, and we did spend a lot of time in preproduction rehearsing and studying the lighting, the lensing and the camera positions," she says. "But then on top of that is the drama of the film, the behind-the-scenes story of what's happening off the stage. As soon as a performance is finished, it's about the colonel and Elvis behind the curtain. So we had to set that up in a completely different environment, but make the audience feel like they are there. The movement slows down, but we maintain a heightened experience so that you really feel that you are on this journey."

Lenses were custom-adapted to Walker's specifications and used to lend the right feeling to different periods and situations. Early years were shot with spherical lenses –



Director writer producer BAZ LUHRMANN and AUSTIN BUTLER - PHOTO Hugh Stewart



Panavision Spheros – and LUTs that desaturated somewhat to echo still photographers of the period like Gordon Parks and Saul Leiter. For scenes later in time, the 1.8x T Series anamorphics were used, detuned to give the image subtle aberrations and tweaked to deliver enhanced contrast and saturation. Typical Panavision blue flare was deemed too modern-feeling, so other colors were introduced by the technicians at Panavision.

Although the big ALEXA 65 sensor was mainly chosen for its epic imagery, Walker also used the depth of field capabilities of the format to create intimacy when the scene required. One example was a close two-shot with Elvis and his beloved mother.

“Large format is the best for intimacy because it focuses the audience on the characters, and diminishes what’s happening in the background,” says Walker. ***“Baz was concerned with the emotional resonance of each shot, which is a great quality in a director.”***

In addition to Spheros and T-Series anamorphics, Panavision

provided Petzval lenses, also manipulated in-house to Walker’s specs. These lenses create a vortex effect and were used to add texture to flashback scenes or situations where a character is feeling the effects of drugs or other disorientation. Again, during prep, Panavision varied the amount of vignetting and focus fall-off to Walker’s requirements, arrived at with careful testing.

Lighting called for similarly specific solutions. In some cases, actual period-accurate PAR cans and spots were used, and at other times, modern LED sources inside period-accurate housings provided more control and cooler fixtures. Walker paid extra close attention to Butler’s eyes.

“My gaffer, Shaun Conway, made an eyelight stick specifically for this film, and our best boy, Jason Poole, was a master of getting it in the right spot,” says Walker. ***“It was essentially a foot-long cone with LiteRibbon inside, covered with diffusion. If we were moving the camera, he’d come underneath the lens, for example. It was soft enough that it didn’t change the lighting, but strong enough to reflect in the eyes.”***



AUSTIN BUTLER as Elvis - PHOTO Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

The entire film was shot on stages, with four exceptions including exteriors at Graceland and Beale Street in Memphis. At sets depicting the interiors at Graceland, the home Elvis built for his parents, there was an example of filmmakers being open to improvisation despite – or perhaps enabled by – meticulous planning.

“We had two sets on one stage, including the downstairs interior of Graceland,” says Walker. “At the other end, we had the bedroom, which is actually upstairs. Baz was considering a scene with Elvis and Priscilla, and it occurred to him that it should be continuous. So we shot the bedroom scene, and worked it out – we literally ran with the actors and the cameras to the next set, still rolling, and they started at the top of the stairs. It was a crazy idea, and something I’d never done before. But it worked. It was like a revelation for everybody, and it kept us in the moment. It was a very dramatic scene, and they didn’t have to break it. It feels like they are in a house. It was fantastic, actually, but it came together after we had planned and built the sets.”

Martin says the refinement of decisions and ideas is continuous until the film is finished.

“It’s that old saying,” Martin says. “It’s 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration. It’s absolutely true. It’s very rare that you overwork something, though it does happen. The more you can work with a task, the more you can actually be free in the moment. All the discussions and possibilities that you’ve considered, and what you’ve collectively decided to do, if for some reason it’s just not working, everyone works together to unlock the issue. And doing the work, and feeling free to throw an idea away and try something different, is the reason you find the solution.”

Elvis premiered at Cannes in May 2022 and was released worldwide shortly thereafter. As of this writing, it has grossed more than \$261 million, against a production budget reported to be approximately \$85 million.

Walker is currently in postproduction on her next feature, Disney’s *Snow White*, which is the latest in Disney’s translation of its animated classic to live-action productions.



(L-r) ROBERT PATTINSON as Batman and JEFFREY WRIGHT as Lt. James Gordon - PHOTO Jonathan Olley™ & © DC Comics



THE BATMAN

Cinematographer **Greig Fraser ACS ASC**
and Colourist **Dave Cole** discuss
finding detail in the darkness
in the gritty DC world of *The Batman*.

By Darcy Yuille



Greig Fraser ACS ASC on set with Director Matt Reeves - PHOTO Supplied.

Director Matt Reeves' vision for *The Batman* drops us squarely in year two of the titular characters' foray into crime fighting, and in many ways is closer to a 70's thriller than the traditional comic book approach seen in recent blockbusters. For a franchise and character that is constantly being reinvented for the screen, this new approach sees a grittier and grimmer world and character than previously seen.

Australian Cinematographer Greig Fraser ACS ASC had previously worked with Reeves on the 2010 Thriller *Let Me In*. Following the successful collaboration, Reeves and Fraser stayed in touch, and would talk over projects they would love to work on, sharing ideas and perspectives, one of these projects being their version of a Batman film. When their schedules aligned for the production of *The Batman*, they invested heavily in testing to devise a look and feel for the project they had been discussing for years.

Central to this testing was Colourist Dave Cole from FOTOKEM London. Cole and Fraser have known each other for years, Cole graded one of Fraser's first music videos, and the pair used to work at opposite service stations in suburban Melbourne when studying. Cole has been an integral collaborator for Fraser in previous films, and the experimentation to devise the look has been a part of their process since working on multiple acquisition formats for *Vice* (AC Mag 81).

Before any discussions about format or lenses, the team engaged in talks about the contrast of the film. The central

question was how to make a film look dark but still be able to register an image the eye could "bite" on. Fraser harvested images, photographs, films, paintings, where the picture looked "dark," but you could still register the image. Collecting a large resource of these, he flicked through these dark images on his computer screen at pace to see which ones registered in a short space of time.

GF "They were shots done in the city at night, like at a bright Bodega (corner store), and there are shadows there that you can't see into, but there is clearly a definition of something bright. What I tried to find was the balance between a dark, moody image but not having something that your eye can bite onto at any given time."

Fans of 70's films, they quickly hit upon an approach to the film that embodied the style of filmmaking from that era. They looked at the cinematography of Gordon Willis ASC (*The Godfather*) and Michael Chapman ASC (*Taxi Driver*), and the type of directors and films that emerged from that period in time such as Martin Scorsese (*Taxi Driver*), Alan Pakula (*All the President's Men*) and William Friedkin (*The French Connection*).

DC "For *The Batman*, we developed a look before principal photography, there were a lot of test shots. We went to Chicago, Scotland, all kinds of places on scouts."

Fraser, Reeves, and Cole all liked the idea of shooting on film, and over the past few years, Fraser and Cole had been



ROBERT PATTINSON as Batman - PHOTO Jonathan Olley™ & © DC Comics

experimenting with a process that saw filmstock's come into play during post-production. Like all DP's who have shot film, the anxiety over a neg report still exists for Fraser, even after shooting film for years. Shooting a film on film is costly, but since the production of *Vice*, Fraser and Cole had been playing with using the post leg of film production to not just recreate the film look, but to create something new and unique. In *Vice*, they had tested shooting on Digital and scanning to film, then back to digital, but the best results at the time had still come from shooting on film. This process was used for the post-production of *Dune* (AC Mag 88), but this time Fraser and Cole pushed the experiment further.

To start, Cole graded the film digitally to as close to a finished product as they could get, so if the worst-case scenario happened and funding dried up or the release date was moved up, the film could be put to market. Once this was done, they sent it out to a digital film recorder, and then shot it onto a 35mm dupe stock at 1 ASA. The next stage was to bleach bypass the film development before contact printing back to a positive. Bypassing the bleach and keeping the silver in the neg traditionally makes the image high contrast, but Cole and Fraser wanted to avoid this and instead maximize the way leaving the silver in the negative enhanced the blooming of the highlights. This process essentially created an analog data storage device in the form of the neg, that enabled them to record the blooming highlights, as well as all the organic aberrations that come from the contact printing process. Colour rippling, loss of resolution and sharpness, frame warping and density shifts were all acquired in the shift

from negative to positive, and then introduced back into the digital realm when scanned in. The shifts in contrast and colour could then be controlled by combining the digital grade and the analog scan.

“To me this had all the benefits of film, the organic feel, not just the grain but the life inherent in a piece of film...”

GF “To me this had all the benefits of film, the organic feel, not just the grain but the life inherent in a piece of film, combined with the benefits of Digital, the dynamic range, the ability to shoot with more freedom, and then you can take this footage and scan it out to different stocks, and gain another level of complexity, the results are limitless and endless. It also gives back the control of the image through the film process that has slowly been lost to cinematographers through the digital revolution.”

The majority of the film has elements of this process built into the image, but there were exceptions where the story or the scale of a shot required the use of the digital image. Cole built up a good emulation of the look into his digital workflow, but he maintains it's still just an approximation.



ROBERT PATTINSON as *Batman* - PHOTO Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures™ & © DC Comics





Greig Fraser ACS ASC on set with Director Matt Reeves - PHOTO Supplied.

DC “That’s the beauty of film. It introduces stuff that you didn’t even think of, it’s random, it just happens, and you don’t know what it is, but it looks awesome, grains, flickers, things like that. But there’s also something that you just can’t lay a finger on, when you’re doing it. And that’s the beauty of the process, because otherwise you just emulate it. And you know, we’re not just going to do it, for the sake of doing it, we’re doing it because it’s bringing something extra to the piece. I’ve always found when I’ve shown people the process, there is something when you see it come back on film, and it’s been matched back. It’s something that you can’t really describe. But it allows, it gives permission to the audience to believe.”

Other analog processes served to build the look on set. The film has a close, myopic feel. Shots are often obscured by deep foreground elements, and this lends the cinematography a sense of claustrophobia. Details poke through the frame with select focus, and this adds to the feel that this is less a “superhero” film from the DC franchise, and more of a Thriller or Horror film. We first meet the titular character through voice over, layered upon fragmented images of a city in decay, burning bright lights and grainy wet shadows. It recalls the gloom and sense of lost hope straight from *Taxi Driver*’s (Michael Chapman ASC) Travis Bickle.

Fraser often used objects in front of the lens to obscure the frame, including clear filters layered with grit and grime.



ROBERT PATTINSON as Bruce Wayne - PHOTO Warner Bros. Pictures™ & © DC Comics



Zoë Kravitz as Selina Kyle in Warner Bros. Pictures' action adventure The Batman, a Warner Bros. Pictures release.



ROBERT PATTINSON as Batman with the Batmobile - PHOTO Warner Bros. Pictures™ & © DC Comics

These become evident in one of the most outstanding action sequences of the film, the car chase between the Penguin and Batman.

To prep for the scene, the team used Unreal Engine to pre-visualize the many various camera angles they could come up with. Fraser believes that Unreal Engine is a vital component of modern filmmaking and urges DOP's to get their heads around the technology.

GF “My prediction is that in ten to fifteen years, as filmmakers, we are going to need to understand how Unreal works. It doesn’t necessarily mean we need to be experts but, for example, we all need to know Microsoft Word or some form of word processing programme just to live in our society. I can see Unreal being a similar need in filmmaking.”

For the car chase, they wanted to strap cameras to as many angles as possible, so they used Soviet era rehoused glass from Iron Glass, and the lenses are quite small and cost effective. We changed the iris to be oval to match the anamorphic lenses of principal photography and bought a couple of early era Alexas to essentially use as crash cameras, and then threw the lenses on cameras.

GF “When the stunt person says you have to put your camera somewhere to be safe, it’s a great option to ask them where we could put the camera if we didn’t have to be safe.”

You can see in the sequences that the perspectives are fresh

and vital. In front of the lenses Fraser also used glass filters covered with bits of silicon and other diffusive properties to create a vignette of dirt and grime, to make it feel like the camera was scraping along the road with the vehicles. The result is brilliant flares and aberrations, something impossible to replicate in post, that again contributes to the organic feel of the footage.

Fraser’s next film is a return to familiar territory with the second installment of the *DUNE* franchise, for which he recently won the Oscar for best Cinematography, where he will look to continue to experiment with the process.



On the set of The Batman - PHOTO Supplied.

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Venice



FX9



FX6



FX3

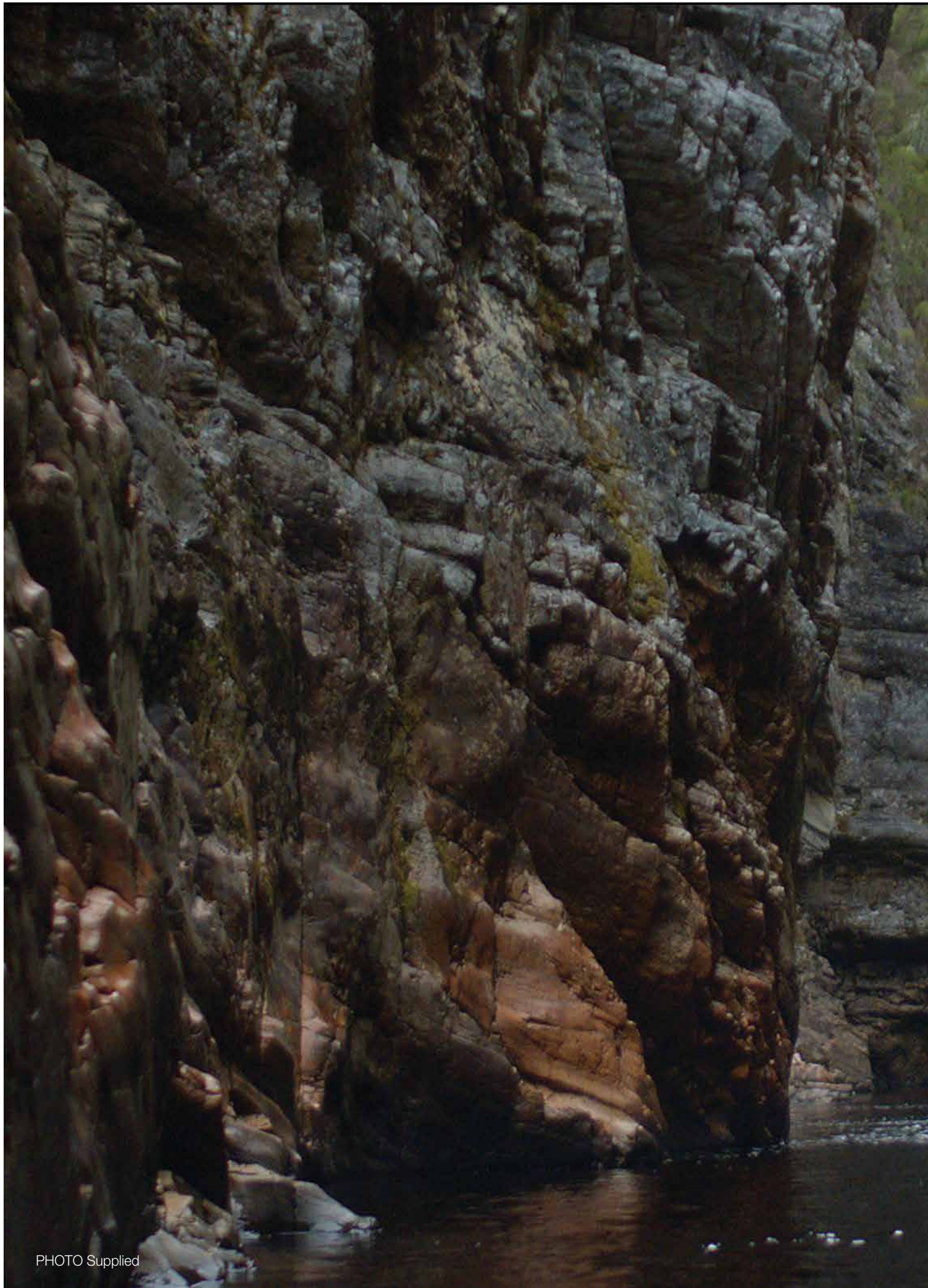


PHOTO Supplied

A full-page background image showing a kayaker in a blue raft navigating a narrow, rocky river gorge. The river is dark and turbulent, with white water rapids. The surrounding cliffs are steep and covered in dense green forest. The title 'FRANKLIN' is overlaid in large white letters.

FRANKLIN

Cinematographer **Benjamin Bryan**
sets out on a wild ride down the Franklin River
with Director Kasimir Burgess for their
new feature documentary ***Franklin.***

By Sarah Jo Fraser



Director Kasimir Burgess filming Oliver Cassidy at the site of the Franklin blockade - PHOTO Luke Tscharke

In 2020 Cinematographer Benjamin Bryan caught up with Director Kasimir Burgess whom he had previously worked with as a focus puller on Kasimir's debut feature film *Fell* (shot by Marden Dean ACS), and the two got chatting about a documentary Kasimir was involved in. ***"It wasn't called Franklin then but he showed me the sizzle reel he'd cut,"*** Bryan remembers. Kasimir suggested that Bryan might not have heard about the 1982 Franklin Blockade, a non-violent protest coordinated by the Tasmanian Wilderness Society against a dam which had been approved by the Tasmanian Government to generate hydro-electricity which would have

had devastating impacts to Indigenous heritage sites and the surrounding ecology. ***"He showed me the trailer and I said, oh yeah, that's my dad. My dad was one of the protestors that got arrested. Immediately that was something which connected me to the project."***

The film follows eighth-generation Tasmanian and environmentalist Oliver Cassidy as he embarks on a life-changing rafting trip down the Franklin River, retracing the journal entries of his late father Michael Cassidy's 14-day expedition to attend the blockade that saved the World-

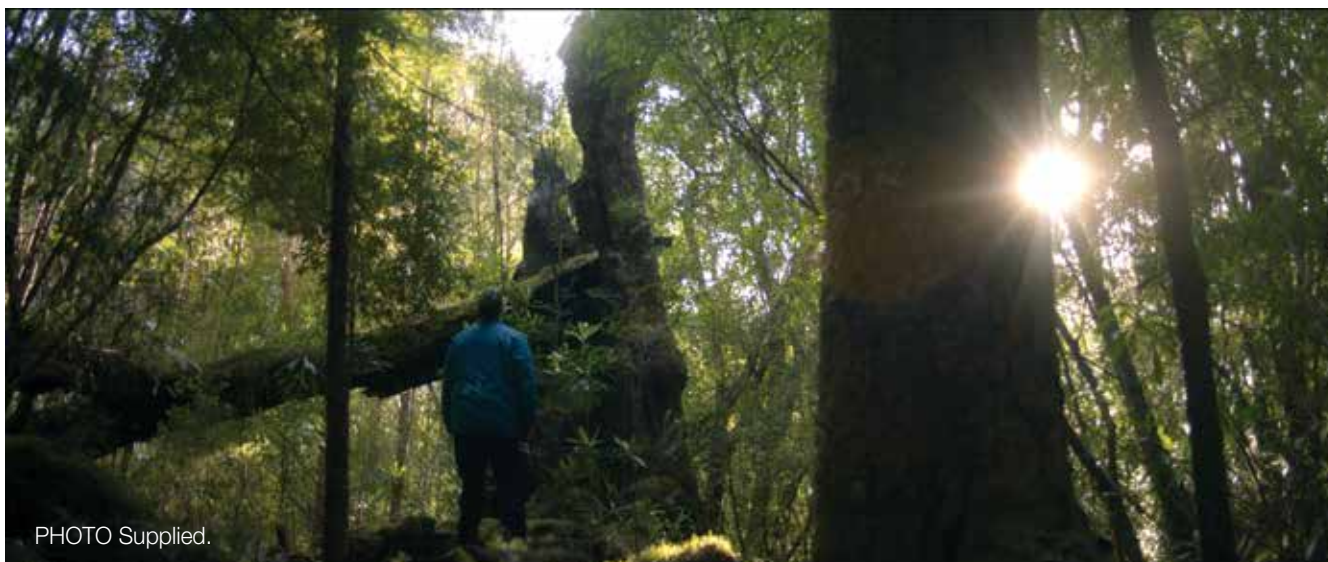


PHOTO Supplied.



Oliver Cassidy - PHOTO Luke Tscharke

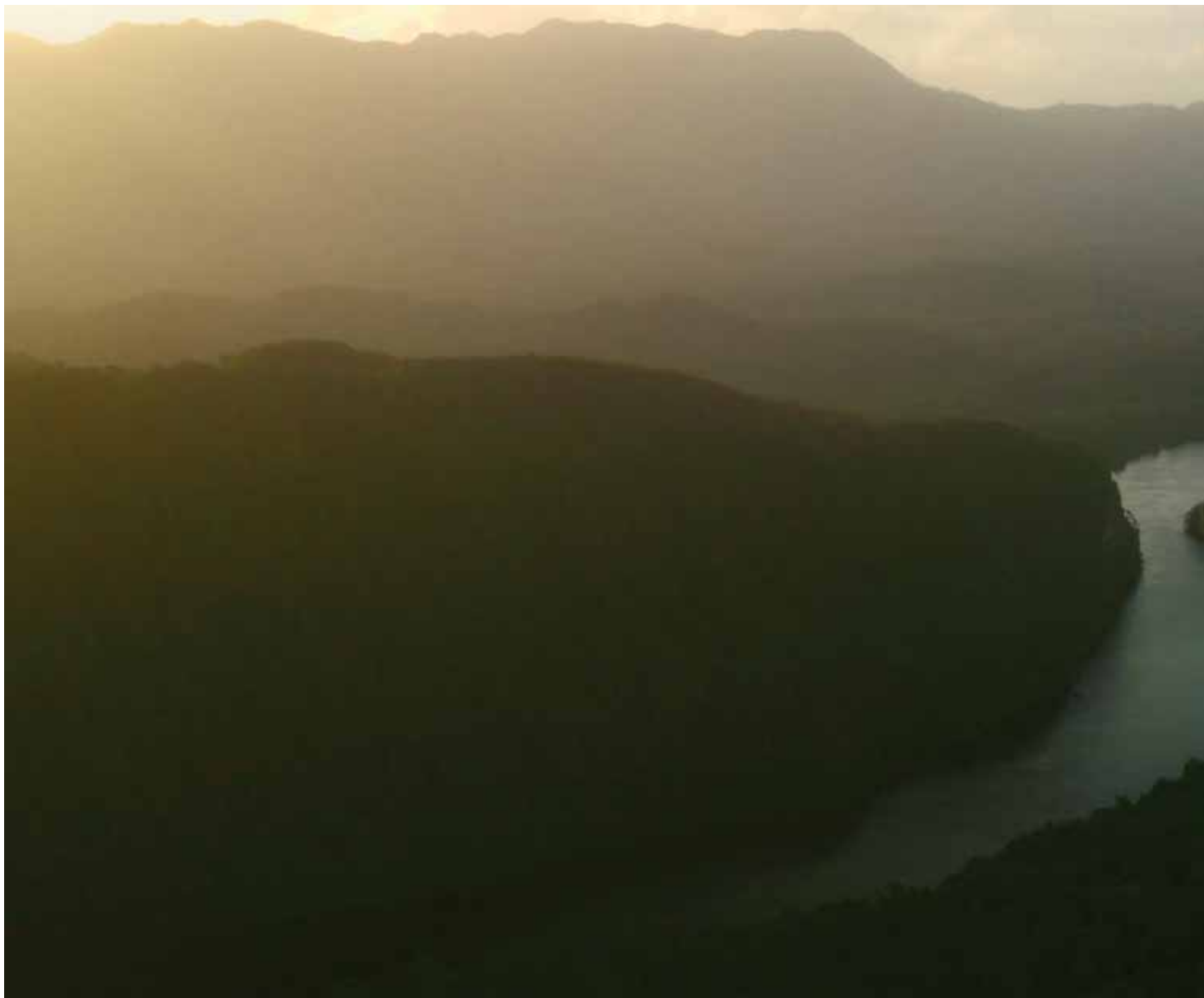
Heritage listed national park from being destroyed, featuring Hugo Weaving as the voice of Michael. The eight-year-long campaign is thought to be the most significant environmental protest in Australia's history.

Producer Chris Kamen and Principal Cast/Co-Producer Oliver Cassidy had been working on the film for about five years prior, so when the pandemic hit there was concern about whether the shoot would go ahead. Miraculously, after a year of lockdowns, they arrived in Tasmania and went into a two-week mandatory quarantine.

“[Kasimir and I] would call each other during the day and go through the personal storyline that had been written by Development Producer/Writer Claire Smith and Oliver to work out how to weave that into the historical story of the blockade. We didn’t have a lot of references and Kasimir was very encouraging for me to dream into the story. The thing with documentary is that once you’re shooting, things can completely change and you just have to throw away the planning that you’ve done, so it was really important to me to think about how to capture the themes of the documentary and the stylistic approach,” Bryan says.



PHOTO Supplied.



After a lot of discussion Bryan suggested shooting *Franklin* on his Alexa Mini LF. ***“Having the best camera to capture that beauty was really important. My main argument was, when are you going to get a chance to shoot a documentary in this place, on this camera? There’s this famous photo by photographer Peter Dombrovskis of the Rock Island Bend which was circulated during the 1980s campaign to save the river which became the main image that got people to fall in love with this place they hadn’t been to. My thought was that he didn’t go down there with a Polaroid camera or a little point and shoot camera, he was down there with a Hasselblad taking these beautiful medium and large format prints of the river,”*** he says.

Burgess had his own Canon C300 mkIII which he was keen to bring along for the journey; ***“it ended up being a good backup camera,”*** Bryan reflects ***“one thing I took away from the shoot is that simplicity is key in documentary. We had about 10 cameras and a few days in it just seemed crazy, there was too much ‘stuff’. Next time I would strip some of that away and focus on an A and a B camera and maybe a couple of rigging cameras.”***

Aspect ratio was also a key component in crafting the look of *Franklin*. It had been suggested that 16:9 might cut in better with the 4:3 archival footage as well as working to frame the walls of the cliffs along the river. ***“The Franklin is this wild frontier place with beautiful landscapes so I pushed for a wide-screen 2.40:1 format; I felt that for framing people and telling the story of Oliver in the landscape it felt natural in that aspect ratio.”***

Bryan brought along a set of EF-converted Contax Zeiss stills lenses – a 28mm, 35mm, and 50mm, and a 16-35mm Canon L-series lens. ***“They were really nice lenses, super sharp and not too contrasty with a bit of a soft painterly look to them. They were really nice to use, except for the focus pulling which I was doing myself. It took a couple of days to get used to pulling by these tiny fractions to make things work,”*** Bryan recalls.

After their two-week quarantine the team set off for a week of interviews driving around Tasmania talking to the major figureheads of the protest, including former Tasmanian Senator Bob Brown, before setting off to Queenstown for a swift few days of pre-production, and then they were off.



PHOTO Supplied.

“Dave Pile who was our river guide had also worked as a Grip and he had such a great sense of where the camera needed to be or the shot that we were trying to get, and he was able to guide the raft where we needed it.”

Four rafts and 10 people made the journey down the river, but amazingly you never get a sense of just how big this crew is on-screen. *“It was a huge challenge at the time because most of the crew were river guides who were there to keep us safe through the journey, which was difficult because they would have somebody in front and somebody behind so if you fall out there’s somebody there to collect you on the way through, or be ahead of you to pick you up on the other side, so you’re constantly trying to keep them out of*

shot. It was this tricky dance of trying to plan ahead in places where we wanted to have them out of shot. In reality it didn’t have an impact on the final film because the more intimate shots with Oliver, rather than the big wides of the river, where what made the film,” says the cinematographer.

Burgess and Bryan made their way down the river in an oar raft with a river guide in the middle rowing while they perched at the front of the boat, while the rest of the crew travelled in paddle rafts with one person at the back steering and four at the front rowing. *“Dave Pile who was our river guide had also worked as a Grip and he had such a great sense of where the camera needed to be or the shot that we were trying to get, and he was able to guide the raft where we needed it. We were super lucky to have him. It’s a dangerous river to raft, and there were lots of times the guides said we just had to put the camera away and focus on getting through a rapid, or portage which is where the rapids are too dangerous to raft and you have to get all the gear out of the boat and take it through these really narrow and steep tracks to the other side and meet the boat there,”* Bryan explains.



A few sunny days at the beginning of the trip gave the crew a good opportunity to find their rhythm, but as they progressed down the river the weather became less and less forgiving. Bryan rigged up a Pelican case which was just big enough to fit the camera fully built with a couple of cloth nappies and a couple of lenses. If a lens change was called, Burgess would huddle down in the front of the boat with an umbrella while Bryan attempted to change the lens without letting any water get into the sensor. *“It’s that kind of rain that just floats down, and it can come in from any direction. The Mini LF got very wet at a few points. The weather seals on that camera must be pretty good because it held up really well,”* says Bryan. *“Eventually with enough moisture getting into the box and on the camera, a few days in you’re starting to get condensation with any heat so I was having to try and keep the camera turned off as much as possible so we didn’t get that heat building up. It was definitely the most inhospitable conditions I’ve ever worked in,”* Bryan says with a slight sense of pride.

Tasmanian local drone operator Luke Tscharke came on board

with his Mavic Pro 2 to find aerial shots, occasionally following Oliver down the river in impossibly clean shots. *“It was an incredibly tough job for him because there weren’t a lot of great places to launch from, and with the steep ravines there wasn’t a lot of GPS reception. It was pretty incredible that we didn’t crash any drones,”* says Bryan.

“I find shooting documentary, especially observational documentary, there’s never any time for lighting.”

In terms of lighting, Bryan relied on finding good natural light to shoot in during the day, choosing to be backlit where possible. *“We brought some candles to shoot Oliver at night for his diary entries which worked well. I find shooting documentary, especially observational documentary, there’s never any time for lighting. Your focus is so much on the subject and what they’re doing and how to connect to that,*



Oliver Cassidy rafting on the Franklin River - PHOTO Benjamin Bryan

by the time you bring even a reflector out it's probably too late," Bryan explains. *"There's a sequence towards the end of the film where all the protestors are getting arrested and it's primarily told through archival footage, and we shot Oliver on a little Canon Super 8 camera to bring him into the past, like he's watching the arresting unfold as if he was there. The camera was working well prior to the shoot and when we got to the river, I realised something had happened, the auto exposure button was locked in and we couldn't unjam it. I was very anxious for that to be developed but it worked a hundred percent, it was phenomenal, it just worked."*

The grade presented the challenge of matching up multiple different camera systems; *"our colourist Edel Rafferty did a crazily good job. By the second day of the grade Edel was practically reading my mind,"* Bryan recalls fondly.

"Being a Cinematographer can be such a technical challenge, and you can plan a lot of things that you're trying to execute as you shoot, but I really learned the importance of finding an emotional connection to the story

and being open," Bryan explains. *"By the end of that trip Oliver had been through this really emotional experience, being trans and having recently transitioned, and following the footsteps of his father who had passed away. There was this beautiful moment at the end of the trip where we got to the part of the river where my dad had been arrested and his dad had been arrested and we both really opened up to being there in our father's footsteps. We were all in tears doing this shot and I think for Oliver, knowing that I was feeling similar things really helped. Trying to break down as much of that barrier between camera and subject is so important. The challenge of having somebody stick a camera in your face on a 28mm lens, trying to get in really close for two weeks is pretty exhausting. Being able to go on that journey with the cast, and as well for them to feel comfortable was really important to me."*

Benjamin Bryan is a Cinematographer from Naarm (Melbourne), Australia. *Franklin* premiered as part of the Features program at MIFF 2022 and was released in cinemas in September. Photos provided by Benjamin Bryan.



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Director **Michael Fardell ACS** and
DOP **Megan Ogilvie** tackles the sun, sea
and real stories in Screencraft's new series
It Takes A Village.

***By Megan Ogilvie
in collaboration with Justine Fardell***



Drone films a high speed boat chase - PHOTO Supplied.

Lighting crew with 12x12 bamboo diffusion - PHOTO Supplied.



Standing on a boat in a rocky sea with thousands of dollars' worth of gear onboard and the harsh Pacific sun beating down on us, I couldn't believe I was on the shoot of a lifetime.

It Takes A Village (ITAV) is a limited drama series produced by Screencraft Media in Papua New Guinea, aimed at PNG audiences – one of the first locally produced dramas of its kind. Funded by the Australian Government, Episodes 2-5 of *ITAV* were filmed in Oro Province, on the east coast of PNG over a series of months with a cast and crew of about fifty. Episode one, the pilot, was shot in Milne Bay province in 2019.

Our small Australian contingent led forty PNG cast and crew into the wilderness to produce the series, training them up on production practices along the way. With a mix of experienced crew and those new to production, the PNG cast and crew walked away equipped with new skills that they can apply in future productions.

In partnership with non-profit charity The Hands of Rescue (THOR), Screencraft developed the series with Dr Barry Kirby AO with storylines based on his real-life experiences in PNG, focusing on maternal health and safe birthing practices. PNG has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the world, with many of these deaths preventable. Raising awareness of these issues is one of the goals of *ITAV*.

The pilot was shot by Director Michael Fardell ACS, with camera operator Toby Finlayson, so my initial challenge was coming on to

a project that had an established look, however Michael and I have worked together for seven years and have developed a collaborative style.

We shot Episodes 2-5 on two Alexa Minis with the 17-120mm and 25-250mm Canon Cine Zoom lenses and our camera operators, Martin Salangau and Milton Gelena, did a fabulous job shooting largely handheld. Our two focus pullers, Suke Guria and Stanish Atio, were both new to the role and rose to the challenge working with the Nucleus-M system for the first time.

“Our frames were made from bamboo and were incredibly strong and light, making them easy to build and move around.”

In lighting, James Karabai and David Bien made use of the glorious PNG sun with 12 x 12 diffusions and bounces. Our frames were made from bamboo and were incredibly strong and light, making them easy to build, pack and move around. The rest of our lighting package consisted of Aputure fixtures. All our equipment came from Australia, so we had to consider our carnet and the budget. A moody jungle night scene with a lantern rigged high in a tree and a hut engulfed in flames brought great joy to Michael and I. It's always fun doing big setups.





Another fun challenge was shooting whole scenes on boats. We rigged an ALEXA Mini to the DJI Ronin 2 at the front of the boat and I had the pleasure of operating it using the joystick remote controller.

“In addition to creating an engaging TV series, our process prioritised training PNG crew so that the local TV industry there can continue to grow.”

Our Technical and Production Supervisor Oliver Willis was in charge of training the crew (many of whom had no set experience), as well as maintenance and troubleshooting for all equipment. These locations were difficult, with long days of salt water, rain and dirt, on top of crew who weren't familiar with this type of equipment, so Oliver really held everything together in this area.

In addition to creating an engaging TV series, our process prioritised training PNG crew so that the local TV industry there can continue to grow. Our goal was for all cast and crew to leave this project more skilled and empowered than when they arrived.

The *ITAV* series is entertaining, with high-speed boat chases, armed raskol gangs and unexpected deaths, but it is also educational, demonstrating the need for strong families and role modelling the 'new PNG man', one who supports his wife during pregnancy and birth. The feedback from the premiere screening of the series in PNG proves that audiences understand these messages, and we've received feedback that conversations about safe birthing practices are being had in households where once the topic would have been considered taboo.

This job was a life-changing experience I will always cherish.

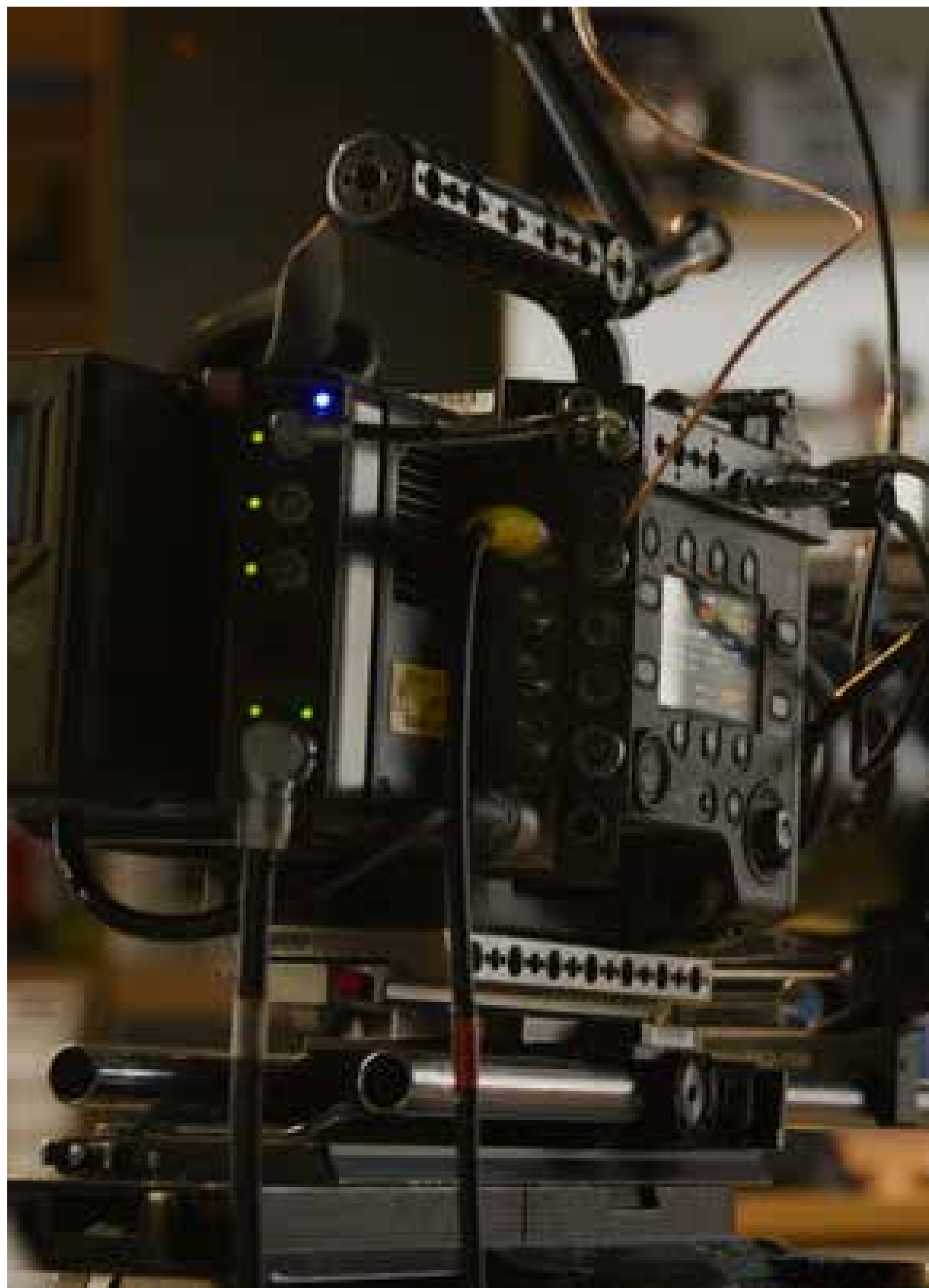
Megan has worked in the film industry for 15 years; 8 in London as a camera assistant and 7 in Australia as a Cinematographer. She is based in Sydney and available for work in Australia and abroad.



B Camera Operator Milton Gelena - PHOTO Supplied.



Actor Brady Skate as 'Rex' - PHOTO Supplied.

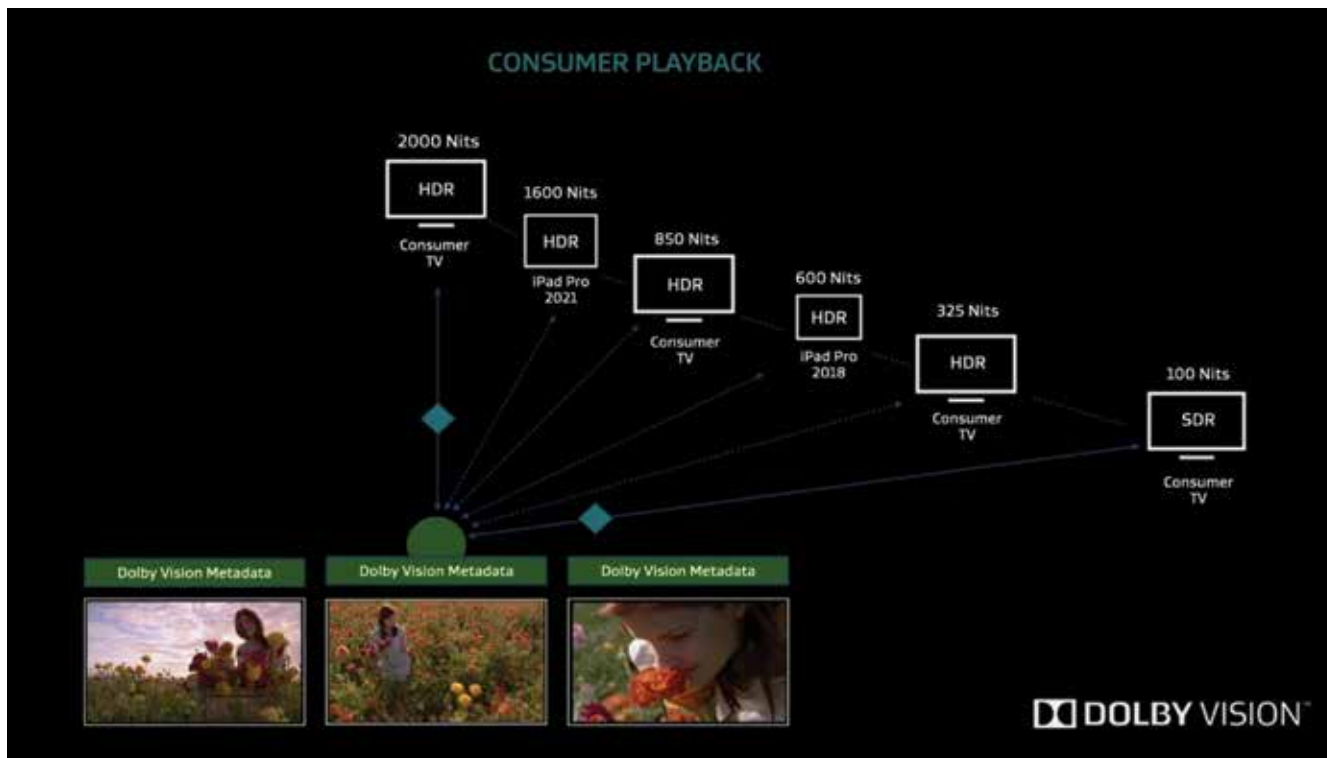




ACS TECH COMMITTEE EXPLORES HDR

The ACS Technology Committee explores HDR
and the industry's new imaging standards.

By Tom Gleeson and Ben Allan ACS CSI



The ACS Technology Committee recently released the results of its detailed investigation into HDR and the associated standards to a packed event at ACS HQ in Sydney. It is easy to form the misconception that HDR or High Dynamic Range is just another in a long line of annoying features on consumer TV's but luckily, in the case of HDR, nothing could be further from the truth.

Nearly three years ago, the Tech Committee started looking into the issue of HDR at the suggestion of Netflix and Panavision, who were both keen to build industry awareness and proficiency for HDR. As the Tech team studied HDR, it quickly became apparent that this was more than a feature for increased brightness, but rather an entire framework for creating and displaying moving images into the twenty-first century.

The Rec.709 standard that we are all familiar with was developed in the 1990's as a High-Definition version of the Rec.601 standard for Standard Definition analogue TV. As a result, Rec.709 is still directly tied to the capabilities of the cathode ray tube (CRT) monitors and televisions of that time, while modern digital display systems are capable of a lot more brightness, contrast, and range of colours. The family of standards that have become known by the shorthand of HDR sets the playing field for image creation now and into the future, including images created for displays with dramatically higher dynamic range capabilities than traditional monitors and televisions.

One of the most significant aspects of HDR is the inclusion of metadata. This is information that can be encoded by the image authors into the video stream and can be read by the consumer display. This metadata can be used by the image authors to create a tone map that considers the

abilities and limitations of each individual display to recreate the image more accurately. Up till now all the efforts of cinematographers, colourists and film makers faced an uncrossable chasm between their final master and the playback on a consumer's device. The thousands of hours of work and carefully crafted images was often lost by various poorly setup televisions and the now bewildering variety of home devices. For the first time metadata creates a bridge and a direct line of communication to any HDR enabled home display.

After several false starts due to the pandemic, the Tech Committee was finally able to arrange a test shoot to gather high quality material specifically for testing the capabilities and options of the HDR standards and workflows. The shoot was held at Lumen Arty Studios with the support of Panavision and Sony. Gaffer Alan Fraser along with Simon Alberry from Cutting Edge joined a team of ACS volunteers along with the Tech Committee, and Toby Oliver ACS who was fortunate enough to be able to assist on the test shoot as DOP while in Sydney between international projects.

Panavision's Nic Godoy provided a Sony Venice Camera Kit with Toby's selection of Panavision Lenses and Simon Alberry from Cutting Edge supplied a full HDR DIT setup. Sony's Anthony Kable provided a BVM-HX310 HDR monitor. This is the same monitor used as the benchmark reference monitor for HDR in most high-end grading suites.

The test shoot served two main purposes. Firstly, it provided an opportunity to compare the experience of monitoring in HDR and traditional SDR on set. For the SDR image, Toby brought along his personal Flanders Scientific Monitor so that he could be confident both in the characteristics of the display and the calibration of the specific unit.



Tom Gleeson operates the RED Monstro on the set of Handled - Photo Supplied.

Although Toby has shot several projects that were finished in HDR, the test shoot was his first opportunity to monitor HDR on set. The benefits to having an HDR monitor were immediate and obvious but it was also noted that it was relatively easy to work to the narrower SDR monitor and format on set with the knowledge that you could expand this out to fill the HDR canvas in the final grade.

The second objective of the test shoot was to generate footage in a controlled and quantifiable way that could then be used to test different workflows and options for HDR in post-production. The test shoot was divided into two sections, using the same actors, and set. A daylight scene and a night-time scene were lit with the premise that these two scenes were representative of a high-end streaming drama. The studio set created the opportunity to fully control both the night-time look and the daylight for the correct effect.

The 6K OCN “RAW” files from the Sony Venice provided a flexible, high quality source image for the Baselight and DaVinci Resolve suites at Cutting Edge and The Post Op Group respectively.

Feeding into this post workflow test was also the short film “Handled” which was shot by Tom Gleeson on a RED Monstro in 8K Redcode RAW. The lush setting in Sydney’s famous Marble Bar provided a particularly rich source of visuals to explore pushing the HDR envelope.

Both sets of footage were edited in Final Cut Pro using a conventional SDR workflow. Luckily for the project, it was possible to coordinate the colour grade of the test day footage at the Post Op Group with another fly in visit to Sydney by

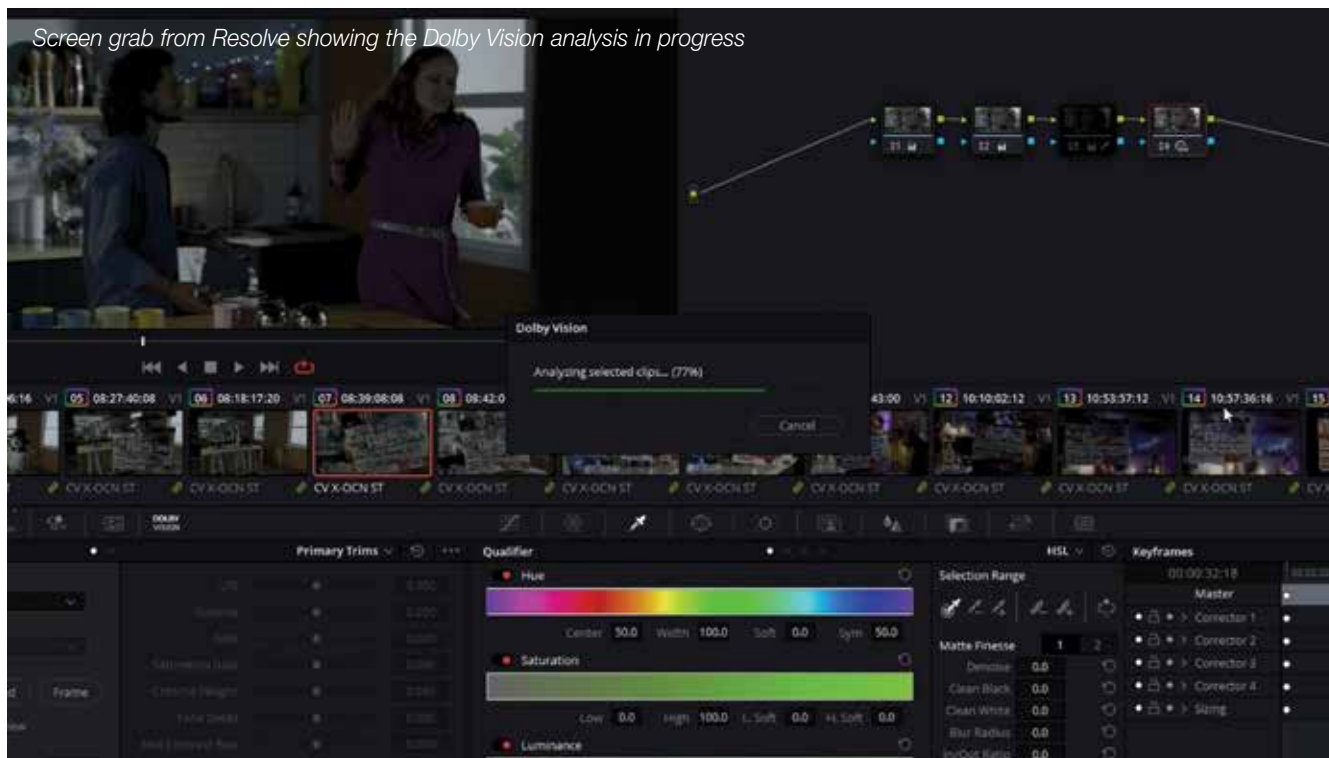
Toby before starting another Netflix project in New Zealand. Colourist Marcus Friedlander worked with Toby to try out the two main options for a HDR finishing workflow.

For the daytime scene the SDR grade was done first and then an HDR version applied from that starting point. This is the same process that Toby has followed on his recent films finished in HDR and is an easy step into the HDR world as the first stage is a completely conventional SDR grade.

However, this also requires a third stage where SDR “trims” are added for the Dolby Vision or HDR 10+ version as cues for how to apply the down-conversion to SDR. These trims have multiple parameters which can be adjusted, shot by shot, to maintain the creative intent in the SDR version. This information is then attached to the master file as metadata which means that a network such as Netflix, can take delivery of a single distribution master which can play out both in HDR and using the trims metadata, be converted to SDR on playout.

By doing a conventional SDR grade first, it is then necessary to try to match the trims to this version in an additional third pass of the grade.

For the night sequence, Marcus and Toby tried the workflow recommended by Dolby. In this process the HDR grade is completed first and then the grade is trimmed in Resolve to create a matching SDR version. By removing a whole, repetitive, step of the process, this is obviously a more efficient workflow overall. Marcus points out that it also provides the opportunity to push parameters in the HDR grade that might otherwise be missed when doing the SDR first and these can



Screen grab from Resolve showing the Dolby Vision analysis in progress

then be properly managed in the SDR down-conversion.

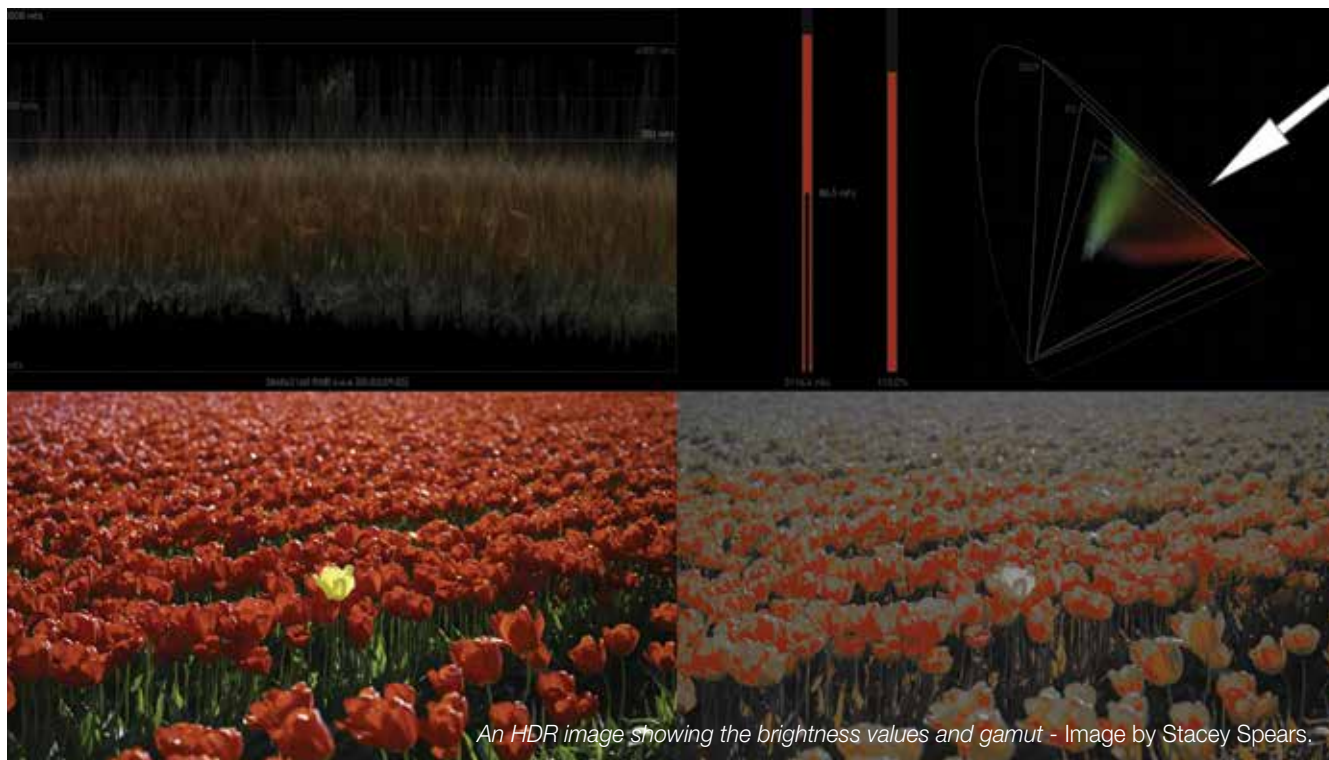
The downsides to this workflow are that the entire grade needs to happen in a more expensive HDR suite and that means leaping straight into the less familiar HDR universe rather than the familiar steppingstone of a traditional grade first. The other reason that many productions are still beginning with an SDR grade is that this is the version that will be shown at cinema screenings, film festivals, premiere events etc. So, for many film makers this is the version that

has urgency and is the highest priority creatively. Because of this, many films both regardless of length are currently being finished with the main grade being applied in DCI-P3 colour space and then using this as the basis for an HDR grade before the SDR trim pass attempts to match back to the cinema version.

One of the big realisations for Toby was how significant the trim pass can be. While this is often treated as a purely technical exercise left to the colourist or even a more junior



Tom Gleeson shoots the short film *Handled* - Photo Supplied.



colourist, in the current environment it is often this version that the vast majority of the audience will see, and is therefore potentially an important part of the process for the cinematographer to be involved in.

“In many ways, the industry is in a period of transition from the old world of SDR to the new more precise and broader HDR canvas.”

As with the ACS Tech Committee's popular Virtual Production Tests a video has been produced as a record and reference for the industry. The HDR Test video which is available in SDR on the ACS YouTube Channel and shows exactly how the test material was shot and also how the different post workflows functioned. The video also looks at how display technology is changing and the roadmap for the future of both mastering and delivery of our images through the coming decades.

In many ways, the industry is in a period of transition from the old world of SDR to the new more precise and broader HDR canvas. Much like the transition from 4x3 to 16x9 television, the challenges are less about the new system but in managing how it interacts with the old one while the transition is taking place. With widescreen TV there were a few years of confusing safe-framing and tricky decisions in post between prioritising the long-term version or what most of the audience sees in the short term.

Luckily, we as an industry learned a lot from that widescreen transition and most people would now agree that for most projects there are major benefits in prioritising the long-term version while keeping a close eye on what the majority of the current audience will see.

The transition to HDR is a very good thing for the craft of cinematography, providing a larger palette of colours and brightness ranges and greater precision of delivery to the audience than ever before. It allows our work to be shown with the right level of picture quality and in ways that preserve our creative intentions even as display technologies continue their rapid evolution in the coming years.

The old Rec.709 format has served us surprisingly well over its long lifespan. However, display technology is progressing so fast, that without adapting our mastering formats, our work will risk becoming aesthetically unrecognisable in the next few years. The collection of HDR standards under the Rec.2100 umbrella give us the best framework yet for preserving the integrity of the moving images we create. It is up to all of us to quickly adapt and make the most of these new options and join this exciting new stage in the evolution of the art of cinematography.

Tom Gleeson is an experienced, award winning cinematographer and the Chair of the ACS Technology Committee. Ben Allan ACS CSI is the first person in the world to be awarded their letters both as a cinematographer and colorist and is an active member of the ACS Tech Committee.



A black and white photograph of a person's profile, looking out over a blurred landscape with trees. The person's head and shoulder are visible on the left side of the frame. The background is a soft-focus view of a field or park with trees in the distance.

ANAK

By Tavis Pinnington



DOP Tavis Pinnington on the set of Anak - PHOTO Supplied.

Anak is a Filipino/Australian film set in Melbourne. The story centres around a young boy, Carlo, who is caught in the middle of his parents' divorce. The film serves as an observational look into the life of Carlo as he navigates racism, masculinity, boyhood, and his father Harry as they live their lives in Australia.

During the lockdown in Melbourne mid-2021 I responded to a callout from a Filipino filmmaker looking for another Filipino Director of Photography. Being of Filipino heritage as well I quickly applied, and Director Caleb Ribates sent over the script. I was so drawn to the story that I knew I had to shoot this film by any means necessary.

“The intent of the film was to make it an observational and meditative visual experience.”

The story, themes and plot called for an approach to Cinematography that isn't commonly seen or done in Western filmmaking. We decided to shoot one

shot per scene, no coverage, and in black and white. The intent of the film was to make it an observational and meditative visual experience. Caleb and I both agreed that if we were to use conventional coverage choices for scenes our visuals wouldn't simmer with the audiences. We storyboarded the film but inevitably there were some significant changes once production started.

“I found the 32mm to be effective in pulling us closer to the character's performances.”

We shot the film on the Blackmagic URSA Mini Pro G2 with a 32mm T2.1 Zeiss Standard Speed lens. Most of the film was shot on this lens with the exception of one improvised scene at the end which we shot on a 16mm T2.1 Zeiss Standard Speed lens. I made the decision to shoot most of the film on one lens because we were framing for wides, and when it came to shooting our close-ups, I found the 32mm to be effective in pulling us closer to the characters' performances, allowing us

the best of both worlds.

Our lighting package consisted of three Redhead lamps, three Nanlite PavoTubes, and various grip gear. Making a feature film with minimal budget and resources can seem almost impossible, but my gaffer Audrey Bosito consistently came up with very creative ways to light our scenes. We often found we were taking away light rather than adding it and when it came to shooting exteriors we scheduled around the sun, often waiting for it to appear.

This experience was deeply personal not only to the Director Caleb, but to myself and a lot of the crew who were Filipino or from a migrant background, and I'm incredibly proud that this film allowed me to explore my Filipino heritage. Personal projects and stories manage to find their way into the light and I can safely say they are worth it every single time. A big thank you to my cast and crew.

Tavis Pinnington is an emerging Cinematographer from Naarm (Melbourne), Australia.
***Anak* premiered as part of the Features program for MIFF 2022.**
Photos provided by Tavis Pinnington.



GO WITH GRACE

By Amy Dellar



DOP Amy Dellar on the set of Go With Grace - PHOTO Supplied.

Go With Grace is Domini Marshall's VCA Masters film, expertly written and directed by her and produced by Anastasia Charisiou. It follows main character Grace in the early hours of a New Year's morning as she escapes her apartment to buy cigarettes and wander the streets, meeting characters who shape the course of her night. A moving, slow-burn look at the aftermath of assault – and a timely reminder that a woman's body is a political battleground.

The delicate nature of Grace's journey was at the forefront of our stylistic choices. Whilst our priority was creating space for performance and important themes to take centre stage, visually we wanted to stray from slapping a 'handheld/realism' style onto the film. We wanted the cinematography to have a sense of pause but bring interest through motivated colour in lighting, fighting the idea that a desaturated world is necessary to reflect the inner state of the character.

“The delicate nature of Grace’s journey was at the forefront of our stylistic choices. Whilst our priority was creating space for performance and important themes to take centre stage, visually we wanted to stray from slapping a handheld/realism style onto the film.”

Shooting all on-location at night, we needed fast lenses that could play with in situ street lighting during long tracking shots where we didn't have the resources to light the streets. We paired Zeiss Super Speeds with our ARRI Amira to achieve this practically and create a beautiful soft and gentle look.

We had a lengthy dialogue scene that took place during the transition of night to dawn which made rehearsing important so we could fly through once that slim window of light started to lift. Francis Healy-Wood, our amazing gaffer, helped create a subtle kiss of bounced light that we maintained as ambient moonlight through to dawn. This silvery kiss of light lifted the talent slightly whilst remaining naturalistic and grounding during the transition. Daniel Stonehouse really nailed the 'Forum blue' colour I was after for the pre sunrise dawn look! It really created a magical atmosphere and with the pink sunlight breaking through as the scene rolled on, captured the symbolism perfectly. Worth a night shoot on a winter's day!

Amy Dellar is an established Cinematographer in Naarm (Melbourne), Australia, *Go With Grace* premiered as part of the Australian Shorts program at MIFF 2022.
Photos provided by Amy Dellar.



MUD CRAB

By Jaclyn Paterson



PHOTO Supplied.

Mud Crab was filmed on location in the Budgewoi and San Remo suburbs on NSW's Central Coast. I have been collaborating with director David Robinson-Smith on this project for several years since the initial idea was conceptualised and expanded upon in our proof-of-concept short *Budgewoi Boy* in 2018.

The filming for *Mud Crab* spanned two separate shoot blocks to allow for the lead actor Joshua Mehmet's weight loss/gain between shoots. In the film it was integral to convey the passing of time between the two chapters of the boy's life. We chose to film the first chapter in the summer's daytime, and the second in winter's night. This proved to be challenging as we shot in the opposite seasons than what is portrayed, and in reverse narrative order.

Mud Crab's story is cynical in nature and could be interpreted as vaguely contemptuous towards its two main

characters and their motives, so it became very important to David that we communicate empathy towards the main character Daniel as well as understand Jenny's point of view. I sought to convey this by composing Daniel and Jenny very centre-frame with shallow depth of field — almost barrelling the lens in every shot so that the viewer is forced to confront and reflect on their story and choices.

We filmed on the ARRI Amira and Zeiss Super Speeds which were made available by AFTRS. These are some of my favourite lenses to use as they have a soft, classic film look with subtle aberrations that I enjoy. Production design and costume were just as important as lens choice, the colour palette for each chapter needed to be distinctly different yet remain within the same world i.e., soft, warm, and pastel tones for summer and cool teals and greens for the winter.

I linked these two chapters together by utilising diffused overhead LED based lighting throughout, however some of my favourite shots in the film were achieved with natural light. We also filmed underexposed and lifted the grade in post to add an additional textural layer of noise/grain.

Overall, I wanted the visuals to be grounded in reality but use the frequently gliding steadicam and dolly camera movements to add a dream-like quality, pairing with the unreliable narrator's point of view and the beautiful score.

Some of my key influences for *Mud Crab* were Claire Denis' *Beau Travail*, Barry Jenkins' *Moonlight* and Paul Thomas Anderson's *There Will Be Blood*.

Jaclyn Paterson is an established Australian-Filipino Cinematographer and colourist from Warrane (Sydney), Australia.

***Mud Crab* premiered as part of MIFF Shorts program at MIFF 2022. Photos provided by Jaclyn Paterson.**

NOT DARK YET

By Max Walter



PHOTO Supplied.

Director Bonnie Moir initially reached out to me about *Not Dark Yet* in December of 2019. We dove into production fairly quickly after our first conversations on the script - and started shooting the first version of the film in early January 2020. We shot for a few days with an incredible crew, and we were proud of what we had achieved, but ultimately felt there was something missing in the original story.

Bonnie knew we needed pickups, but the pandemic hit, and the film was almost buried. Over a year later when one of the many lockdowns lifted, for a brief moment, we decided to dive back into the story with a totally revised script that actor Nic Denton and Bonnie had been working on together.

For obvious reasons, the scale of the production changed dramatically. From a fully-fledged art department, lighting, and camera team from when we shot for a few days in early 2020, to just me, Bonnie, a sound recordist, and the producer when

we came back to shoot pickups.

The story evolved as we shot it, and our pickups became more and more of the story. The scenes from the initial shoot became memories to a bleaker, more isolating present. Whereas our earlier shoot was more traditionally lensed, the re-shoot leant into long lenses with an extremely shallow depth of field, using claustrophobic close ups that lingered, hopefully creating an uncomfortable intimacy for the viewer.

Richard Moir, the lead actor and Bonnie's father, who has had a prolific career in Australian cinema over the last few decades lives now with advanced Parkinson's, and everything you see on screen is him. It was a privilege to see him and Nic work together.

Much of the story took place in Richard's room and bathroom which we lit with essentially two small LED fixtures, a 10amp dimmer, and a lamp from my house.

The practical restraints of filming during the pandemic with minimal crew in an aged-care home helped to put the two distinct timelines apart. The past, in Richard's memories, had a more designed and a more evenly lit feeling, whereas the present was messier and filled with shadows.

What was absent from the frame was just as important as what was in it. Luckily Bonnie and I were on the same page when it came to darkness and negative space. So much of the story dwelt in the unsaid, in the space between words, between people. This guided our approach in a lot of ways.

We chose to shoot large format on the Alexa Mini LF, with rehoused Leica R's.

Max Walker is an established Cinematographer from Naarm (Melbourne), Australia.

***Not Dark Yet* premiered as part of the Accelerator Shorts program at MIFF 2022.**

Photos provided by Max Walter.

PINK REEF

By Zeke Collins



Pink Reef is an experimental short film set in an absurd suburban world where a mermaid struggles in isolation without running water.

When Director Chloe De Brito first pitched the idea to me she gave me a few parameters to work with; “Absurd, funny and lots of colour. Also, we have no money.” We begged, borrowed and stole our way into a handful of Blondies, Redheads and Dedos, as well as a couple of Kino Flos. We shot on a Red Raven with Samyang prime lenses. For the top-down shots, Sound Recordist Luke Fuller whipped together a rig out of c-stands and cheap timber from Bunnings.

Although only hitting the festival circuit

this year we actually shot *Pink Reef* in 2016. Looking back at the gear we used I shudder a little. The Samyang prime lenses have an awful amount of chromatic aberration, particularly when paired with the Red Raven’s crop sensor. None of the lights we’d scrounged up had enough power for the Raven’s light-hungry sensor either.

It might be a cliché, but the limitations of the gear actually worked to our advantage. The shoot would have been easier with modern RGB LED panels instead of tungsten lights which had to be gelled and softened, but those limitations also forced us to be creative. We softened the image with a Scheider 1/2 Black Frost filter (again, borrowed).

We leant into the camera noise, too, and boosted the ISO well beyond the ISO400 that I usually rate the Red Raven at.

Chloe and I have worked together a lot over the years which means that we have a great working relationship with a lot of trust and a great shorthand way of communicating. The set was truly collaborative in the way that only low budget sets can be, *Pink Reef* was a labour of love, a passion project for every member of the crew.

Zeke Collins is an established Cinematographer from Warrane (Sydney), Australia. *Pink Reef* premiered as part of the Australian Shorts program at MIFF 2022.

Photos provided by Zeke Collins.



VICTIM

By Joey Knox



Victim was a huge team effort. It was a combination of lots of different elements coming together with the focus to create a dark yet realistic world. My collaboration with Director/Writer Rob really began when scouting, we knew the house was a crucial element that had to have the right feeling and space to shoot, we wanted something gritty but not falling apart.

Once finding the right location we began working out our shooting process. Rob and I felt handheld were the right approach for all the house interiors. It doesn't allow the camera to settle and has a slightly uneasy feeling, reflecting the struggling relationship between Beau and Chrissy.

Our other main rule was to obscure Beau at the beginning of the film and gradually introduce more and more of his face throughout the film, reflecting Chrissy's struggle to connect with him. To also leave some mystery behind who he really was. In terms of lighting, I tried to keep the room as free of lights on stands as possible, most of the rooms had a couple light mats rigged to pole cats, pracs and an HMI of sorts coming through the window.

Joey Knox is an established Cinematographer from Naarm (Melbourne), Australia. *Victim* premiered as part of the Accelerator Shorts program at MIFF 2022.

Photos provided by Joey Knox.



SUSHI NOH

By Sam Steinle



DOP Sam Steinle on the set of Sushi Noh - PHOTO Supplied.

Sushi Noh is a fantasy-horror short film made as part of my Masters degree at AFTRS. The film was shot on the ARRI Amira with Zeiss Standard Speeds provided by AFTRS. Despite the fantasy-horror genre, I wanted the film to still feel real, and felt that shooting spherical would suit the tone. Plus, I adore the treatment of space in the Standard Speeds, there's such a

beautiful focus roll-off and organic feel to the glass.

A tight schedule and budget meant that we needed to re-use sets for multiple locations without time to re-paint them in between shooting and knew that we had to adopt colours that would work on many levels, whether matched or contrasted with different lighting states.

Jayden Rathsam Hūa (Director), Calum Wilson Austin (Production Designer) and I chose warm tones as our base palette for a sickly, unpleasant atmosphere as opposed to providing warmth to the scenes. We also added algae-style greens and cyan for an atmosphere of moisture and dampness.

Throughout the film, the characters are



drawn increasingly under the power of the Sushi Noh (a sushi-making machine that possesses the spirit of an evil Noh Monster) and I wanted to reflect this in the evolution of the lighting design. Beginning with a naturalistic, harsher daylight texture before gradually evolving into more saturated, softer, and artificially motivated states. During pre-production I tested many different colour gel presets (over 70!) with the sets and a stand-in before settling on a selection for the film. We ended up using a mixture of RGB LED and Tungsten lamps throughout shooting for varying layers of texture in each scene.

I loved using the texture of hard light as it provides a brutal, inhospitable tone for the scenes and really animates the shadows - giving them a 'living' quality, which I felt suited the nightmarish nature of the film. Conversely, I loved the idea of shooting the most grotesque element - the Sushi Noh itself - in as soft and flattering light as possible, to contrast against the hideous nature of the creature. Additionally, I chose to shoot each scene in which the monster has action with increasingly saturated tones, symbolising the growing dominance of the monster.

The climax of the film takes place in the monster's realm - a spirit world with no 'natural' light sources, so I had to devise a way to motivate the lighting while representing the control of the monster. With some generous support from the Art Dept, I designed and developed several custom fabric prac lanterns which we nicknamed the Jellyfish lanterns, to light the scene. We suspended Astera Helios tubes inside them and added a gentle heartbeat pulse, to portray being inside the belly of the beast.

I'd like to extend my deepest gratitude to the whole cast and crew, as well as the staff and students at AFTRS.

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Sam Steinle is an emerging Cinematographer from Warrane (Sydney), Australia. *Sushi Noh* premiered as part of the Accelerator Shorts program at MIFF 2022.

Photos provided by Sam Steinle.



LUCKY PEACH

By Joanna Cameron



Behind the scenes of Lucky Peach - PHOTO Supplied.

Lucky Peach is a short film about a daughter leaving her home and her single, immigrant mother, to pursue a career overseas. The impending departure pushes mentally unwell mother Mei, leaving daughter Lu torn between following her passion and caring for her mother.

In pre-production discussions with Director Grace Tan, we both agreed compositionally that what was important in this film was the relationship between the two characters and being able to see how they physically and spatially related to each other. This meant wider frames that clearly showed the physical space and tension between the characters.

For Lu, I wanted to emphasise the way in which she sought order and structure to maintain a degree of control over the chaos created by her mother's mental illness. In composition, I framed Lu

incidentally with sharp edges, clean lines of the surrounding architecture, and straight objects to emphasise the orderly and controlling way she approaches her life and relationship with her mother.

I also wanted to create a sense that Lu had outgrown her home and her life there, composing static pre-meditated frames that Lu moves within, right to the edges, to really emphasise her sense of confinement.

As Mei struggles to deal with the impending loss of her daughter she begins to slip deeper into her mental illness. In opposition to Lu, her emotions and turmoil start to manifest as mess and disorder, with the camera framing her with less structure, from differing heights and indirect perspectives. I really wanted to emphasise the weight of Mei's past emotionally as well as her inability to rise above it, keeping her

compositions sitting much lower in her body.

While Lu's eyelines were very tight to camera, I used wider eyelines for Mei, highlighting her inability to connect with her daughter and the present moment in a direct way.

We used Vintage Baltar lenses and at a greater stop they resolve beautifully and consistently, however once opened up they start to fall apart at the edges in quite a dramatic way. As Mei begins to slip deeper into her mental illness, I used the aberration of the lenses wide open to visually signify her reality starting to distort, as the lines begin to blur between the past and present.

I also had a specific visual language that related to the characters when engaging with each other. I chose to keep the perspective neutral, at eye height, but to continue a trend of profile two shots to keep the two characters in constant



opposition to each other and emphasise the tension and space between them. Initially, I used a very wide lens to really push the characters away from each other in the frame. Although they are in opposition to each other, I intended to evoke a sense of sameness and connection that is inescapable as

mother and daughter by keeping them on the same Z-axis, with a deeper depth of field and consistent lighting across the characters, giving them each equal weight in the frame.

I returned to this profile wide for the moment of their final goodbye when they resolve their differences and the

space between them is physically closed.

.....
Joanna Cameron is an emerging Cinematographer from Warrane (Sydney), Australia.

***Lucky Peach* premiered as part of the MIFF Shorts program at MIFF 2022.**

Photos provided by Joanna Cameron.

A HOUSE

By Joanna Cameron



PHOTO Supplied.

In this short film the protagonist Tina suffers from body dissociation, a result of unresolved trauma from her father's discipline techniques as a child. Now her father is close to death, and she is given one last opportunity to express her frustrations and resolve her trauma.

What I found interesting about the script was the protagonist's inability to express herself. The confusion around her feelings, her shame in the presence of her mother and father and within the family home leaves the main character voiceless. Throughout the film Tina tries again and again to find her voice and express herself but is unable.

When developing the visual language, I decided to use very consistent, evenly framed close ups of the protagonist's blank, inexpressive face, subverting the viewers experience of close ups as intimate and emotionally revealing compositions. Instead, these shots emphasised her unresponsive, emotionally disconnected nature and inability to verbalise.

To emphasise this further I used slow zooms in what would normally be emotionally heightened moments, intending to evoke a sense that even the camera is waiting and almost pressuring her to finally express herself and verbalise what she is thinking.

“It is the family home, with all the trauma she experienced there, that carries the power. I used unmotivated camera movements and lighting to really emphasise this power dynamic and Tina’s lack of autonomy in the space.”

Director Matthew Taylor and I really wanted to emphasise her lack of autonomy and power in the family home through the movement of the camera. It is the family home, with all the trauma she experienced there, that

carries the power. I used unmotivated camera movements and lighting to really emphasise this power dynamic and Tina's lack of autonomy in the space.

Any insight into how Tina is feeling is given through the body. In contrast to her blank, unemotional close ups, I used very deliberate, tight and textural frames showing the way in which her rage and frustration manifested through her body. When Tina goes to confront her father I played on the truthfulness of her bodily expression, putting more weight compositionally into her body and following her nervously crossed arms until she sits down, before gradually tilting up to her face. Through these choices I really wanted to build the idea that the body was the true communicator in this story.

I shot this project on the ARRI Amira with vintage Panchro lenses. I chose these lenses because although they had a soft vintage feel, they still resolved very consistently across the frame. The tone of the film is quite stark and



PHOTO Supplied



PHOTO Supplied

harsh, so I wanted to steer away from anything that would look too dreamy and beautiful. The biggest challenge for me was lighting the film making each space in the house feel slightly different, keeping the film visually engaging but never distracting. I made a map of the house with colour and mood references for each room, as well as details on how

that space would progress through the story, that I could refer to as we shot. Production Designer Emily Jansz and I went through the spaces together discussing how we could emphasise this further with the use of different curtains and blinds, as well as practical lighting sources.

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Joanna Cameron is an emerging Cinematographer from Warrane (Sydney), Australia.

***Lucky Peach* premiered as part of the MIFF Shorts program at MIFF 2022.**

Photos provided by Joanna Cameron.

LIME PARFAIT

By Bonita Carzino



DOP Bonita Carzino on the set of Lime Parfait - PHOTO Supplied.

I was so excited when Director Pat Mooney asked me to collaborate on *Lime Parfait*. I had seen his previous work *Jeannette is the Dog* and knew he had a unique whimsical tone that was really different from anything else I had seen coming out of the short form world. He wanted to shoot the film on 16mm, being his preferred format, which caught my attention.

The shoot was short and consisted of a very small crew. My 1st AC/Focus Puller was Austin Gilbert, who provided immense support during the production. Nicholas Hower from Post Lab IO was the colourist and did an amazing job bringing out the natural 16mm pastels.

Most of the shoot was exteriors (an outdoor patio and beach), with one day of interiors inside a paint shop. We used Kodak Vision 3 250D #7207 in the day exteriors and Vision 3 500T #7217 for the day interior inside a paint shop. We used available natural light for the shoot as we were limited by the small

crew and budget, but it nonetheless worked in favour of the tone and style. The only lighting we utilised was the overhead fluorescent lighting in the paint shop, cutting what we didn't want, and we had a small point source that we bounced into a 4x for their key.

It was a small space, and we didn't have any budget for lighting, but we made it work. My key influence was the films of Éric Rohmer, particularly

The Green Ray and *Full Moon in Paris*. They are 16mm pastel dreams, always naturally lit, small scale stories which provide a sense of intimacy. Hannah Camilleri was our lead, and co-wrote the story with Pat. Her naturalness in front of the camera and comedic timing gives the film life. We were very honoured to have the film premiere at Melbourne International Film Festival 70 this year as part of the Accelerator program.



PATTERNS OF THE AFTERNOON

By Bonita Carzino



PHOTO Supplied.

Director Maddelin McKenna and I have been friends, roommates, and creative collaborators for years so when she approached me with this project of course I was on board straight away. When she told me it would be shot on black and white celluloid, I was so excited.

Patterns of the Afternoon follows a woman moving out of the apartment in which she raised her only daughter. Over the course of the day, she becomes entranced by a young pregnant girl moving in next door. Maddelin wanted the film to feel like a hallucination playing with time and memory and I think the choice to shoot on black and white was perfect for this. We used Kodak 16mm Eastman Double-X Negative B&W #7222 and shot on an ARRI 416 Plus HS rented from The Vision House in Melbourne. Drew Collins and Harrison Byrne were on focus, two dear friends and people I have been working with for a very long time, and Bronte Mularczyk as 2nd AC.

The film was lit by my friend and gaffer Francis Healy Wood and Louis Walter. Maddelin wanted to show a sense of

panic with our protagonist Verity Higgins in a visual way throughout the film.

After working through a few options, we landed on using a Bolex camera for certain moments where we would unlock the pressure plate resulting in an out of focus “breathing” to the image which we both loved and thought it achieved. I wanted to go with a very natural look in terms of lighting, leaning into the grunginess and grittiness of some of our black and white references.

Maddelin and I watched a lot of black and white cinema leading up to the film such as Paweł Pawlikowski’s *Cold War* as well as Josef Sudek’s black and white still life photography, and we fell in love with the format.

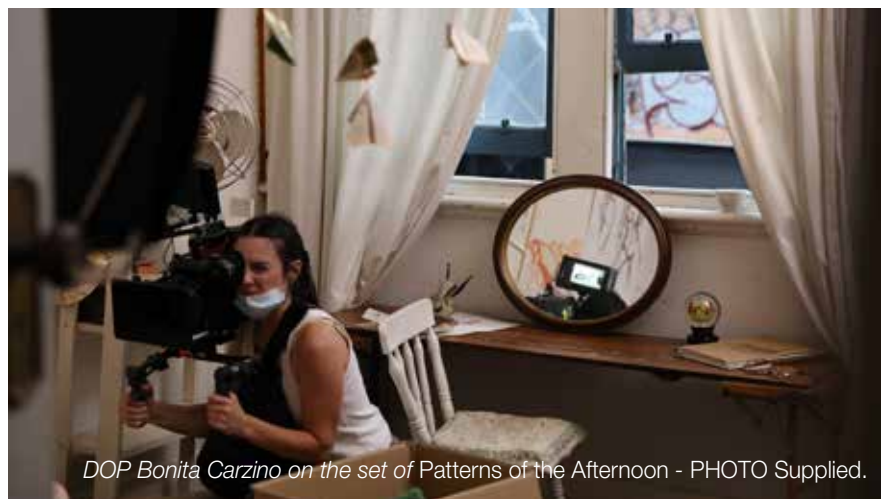
Bonita Carzino is an established Cinematographer from Naarm (Melbourne), Australia.

Lime Parfait* and *Patterns of the Afternoon

both premiered as part of the Accelerator

Shorts program at MIFF 2022.

Photos provided by Bonita Carzino.



DOP Bonita Carzino on the set of *Patterns of the Afternoon* - PHOTO Supplied.

AFTER A CLEARING

By Sabina Maselli



After a Clearing is a reflection on our relationship with the natural world. It is a collaboration between filmmaker Sabina Maselli and musicians Kaylie Melville and Tilman Robinson, using 16mm film and electro-acoustic sound to create a sense of nostalgic resonance. Both the images and the sound explore ideas of materiality and erasure, and what remains after erasure (decaying sound loops, scratches on a film, a forest after a bushfire).

The opening and closing sequence in the film is of a blank screen ascending and descending to reveal/conceal a

“I was interested in the idea that for humans, nature is always a projection, whether as a real image or a virtual memory.”

forest. Part of the film was made by projecting footage of burnt trees (after the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria) onto a human body. This body becomes the canvas, and the filter of the images (an intervention). I was interested in the idea that for humans, nature is always a projection, whether as a real image

or a virtual memory. As nature is forever altered by human actions, does its image still survive in our memories, and if so, for how long? Or does ‘nature’ slowly fade into a mythical dimension? In all my moving image works, the act of filming is indivisible with the subject matter, always with a sense that one is subliminally influencing the other.

Sabina Maselli is an artist and filmmaker from Naarm (Melbourne), Australia. *After A Clearing* premiered as part of the Experimental Shorts program at MIFF 2022.

Photos provided by Sabina Maselli.

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VENICE 2 IN AUSTRALIA

By Patrick Van Weeren



PHOTO Supplied.

Videocraft and Sony Australia recently demonstrated the workflow of the Sony FX3, FX6, FX9, Venice and the new Venice 2 during their free workshops in Melbourne and Sydney.

The workshops were designed and led by cinematographer Patrick Van Weeren; ***“It is helpful to test the limits of a camera and judge the result in post after compression takes a hold of it”***. The test results were monitored in SDR and HDR with several pipelines available, including Davinci Resolve, AVID and Adobe CC.

“We noticed that all cameras deliver great 4K but the real difference can be found within the photo site density and compression. The FX3 and FX6 start with 10.2 MP. The FX9 holds the middle with 19MP, the Venice 6K follows up with 24.4 MP and the 8K Venice 2 tops the current line up with 50MP”.

The interchangeable Venice 6K sensor has a dual native ISO of 500 and 2500. The new 8K Venice 2 sensor is rated at 800 and 3200. For most participants the ‘original’ Venice is considered the

main unit production camera, while the Venice 2 positions itself (currently) as a really strong Special FX camera. With even lower noise, wider dynamic range and a surplus of resolution. Both Venice cameras really show they are made for HDR delivery. The noise levels and highlight roll off are pleasant and give the colourist lots to play with. To deal with the larger data the AXS recorder is now ‘built into’ the Venice 2 instead of the SxS Pro media. No need for the external R7 raw recorder as seen with the original Venice.

With HDR delivery starting to pop up in the industry, the dynamic range was a hot topic and a big part of the tests conducted.

“We’ve gotten used to the safety of giving the colourist room to play with in post. We worked mostly with wider dynamic range and colour spaces than the final delivery format. Now most of the dynamic range and color space ends up on screen with HDR delivery, so we need to step up our game (again)”.

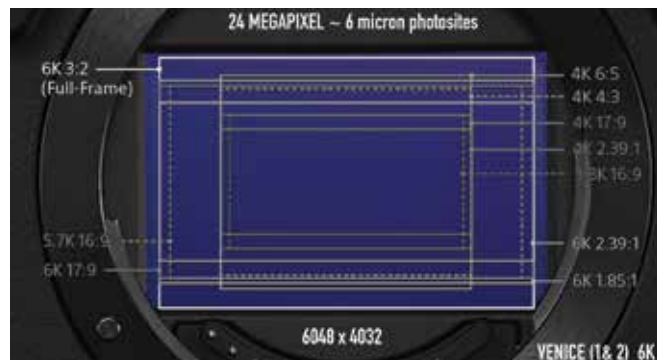
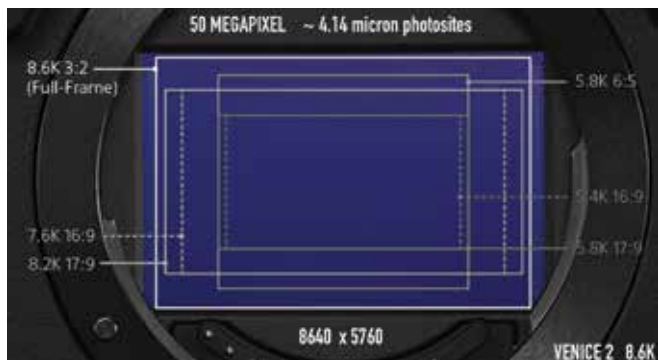
Sony boosts a 16 stop latitude on

the Venice 2 and to monitor this ‘on-the-fly’, some of the proprietary viewfinders in the range have a ‘High-key/low-key’ feature. With the flick of a switch you can go judge the exposure in a bracketed area where you’re most concerned. To be able to pixel peep before most of the video processing takes place is a great relief for cinematographers, especially when HDR monitoring on set is still a costly solution.

The X-OCN codecs are able to reduce data rates to keep budgets under control when the Venice performance is dialed up to the max. (See schematic). Looking at the popularity of the Venice (e.g. *Peter Rabbit 2*, *Ozark*, *Bridgerton*”, *Top Gun Maverick*) it is no surprise that Videocraft rentals added 3 Venice packages to their inventory, but with the FX3 recently gaining the sought after Netflix approval there’s really a full frame camera for every budget.

More information can be found on www.videocraft.com.au or sonycine.com

Photos provided by Patrick Van Weeren.



GOODBYE FOR NOW, ANDREW COLLIER

A Panavision legend retires after 38 years.

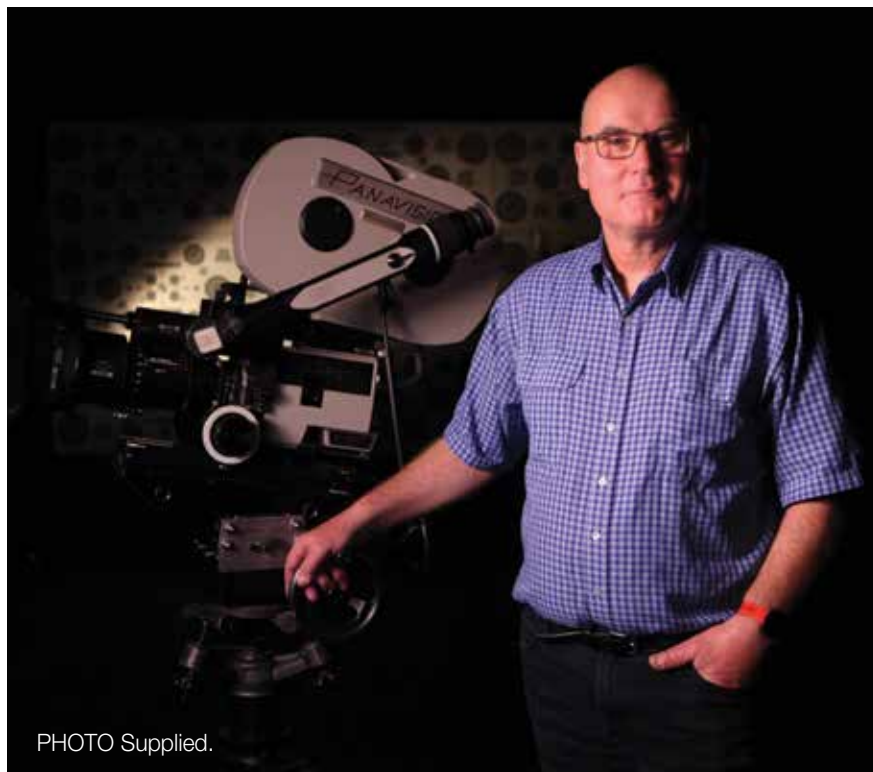


PHOTO Supplied.



Australian Cinematographer Magazine would like to acknowledge the hard work and contribution of Andrew Collier who is this year saying goodbye to Panavision after an impressive thirty-eight years of service.

Andrew's interest in filmmaking began in high school making films as part of his English class curriculum, acting as DP and Editor for a project which notably won an award. Upon completing school in 1977 Andrew enrolled in a Film Certificate course at the North Sydney Tech College where he learned many new skills in filmmaking and made some lifelong friends. The one-year course finished up in 1978 and Andrew found himself working in an electronics warehouse for five years after an unsuccessful bid at film industry employment.

Andrew caught wind of a job going at a film rental company and scored an interview, and in March of 1984 he started working at John Barry Rentals. In the early days of camera rentals Andrew reminisces that a takeover would occur every few years, and he

credits these takeovers by international rental companies with the fact that he's been able to maintain employment for a phenomenal thirty-eight years.

Society President Erika Addis ACS had this to say about Andrew; ***“Andrew Collier is a gentleman and a rev head. I met Andrew last century when he started at John Barry’s Rentals, and a little later I discovered he was best friends with my wonderful mechanic Wayne Griffiths with whom he shared many rallying adventures. Andrew loves a road trip and has often had to drive a bit faster than legally allowed to a place he’s never been before to deliver aide to the Camera Department. When he extolled the virtues of the satnav system in his car for this reason, I took note and got one myself. Our last encounter was at the old Panavision premises when I led participants in the Camera Assistants workshop on a site visit. Andrew hosted everyone beautifully, showing his characteristic attention to detail, grace, wit and generosity. You leave big shoes to fill Andrew! Good luck***

with all the projects ahead and I’ll see you there.”

His love for the industry stems from the great comradery within Panavision, and his job in Technical Marketing has taken him onto some of the biggest film sets in Australia. These days his journeys onto set see Andrew universally greeted by all crew members from grips to gaffers, and of course camera crew who treat him like an old friend and give him a great feeling of belonging.

Covid has prohibited Andrew from getting onto sets as freely as he once did, and in his downtime, he's turned to other things to keep him busy such as engraving filter tags for camera assistants, as well as engraving Panavision's new equipment with their high-tech laser engraver.

At sixty-two years of age Andrew has decided to bid Panavision farewell for the last time. Andrew, we wish you all the best and hope you have a safe and happy retirement.



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