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MONEY HEIST

THE FINAL SEASON

Leitz

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BY DEFINITION of the Australian Cinematographers Society's Articles of Association, "A cinematographer is a person with technical expertise who manipulates light to transfer visual information by the use of a camera into aesthetic moving images on motion picture film or electronic recording systems."

FEATURES...

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DEPARTMENTS...

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ARRI AUSTRALIA

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

For me, living in Melbourne, it's a time of year I love as the Melbourne International Film Festival descends on the city. Sitting at home watching these films just isn't the same as attending the festival in person, however we are still able to bring you great stories from this year's MIFF program.

Germain McMicking ACS was kind enough to share his experiences on filming Justin Kurzel's *Nitram* which follows the events leading up to the 1996 Port Arthur massacre, and Milli Award-winning Geoffrey Simpson ACS talks to us about filming the new thriller *Lone Wolf* starring Hugo Weaving. We interview cinematographer Dimitri Zaunders about his work on *Friends and Strangers*, while Matthew Chuang ACS talks about teaming up with Ante Cheng to film *Blue Bayou* which was also selected at Cannes this year.

MIFF-selected films aside, the amazingly talented Nicola Daley ACS chats to us from the UK about her work on the much-anticipated new Terence Davies' WWI drama *Benediction*, and our good friend Earle Dresner ACS prepares us for the upcoming ABC series *The Newsreader*. New Zealand-born cinematographer Ben Seresin BSC ASC talks to us about shooting the epic feature *Godzilla vs. Kong*, and I have the pleasurable task of interviewing the directors and artistic team behind the hit Brisbane-based phenomenon that is *Bluey*.

We also bring you stories about a new campaign for Australian brand Country Road, a once-in-a-lifetime television event in Egypt, articles about drone and cyber-scanning technologies, on the short films *The Untold* and *Delta of Venus*, a terrific story about the career of legendary news cinematographer David Brill AM ACS, as well as our semi-regular trip to Brazil.

I truly hope you enjoy reading the pages of this magazine, as much as we enjoy putting them together for you.

Until then... peace.

James Cunningham
Editor,
Australian Cinematographer Magazine

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings ACS colleagues and sponsors,

Covid. Covid. Covid.

That is all we seem to hear across all platforms, but I want to put it to one side and talk about... family. All of us have families that are our support mechanism. They are there during the good and the bad, the highs and the lows. We are cinematographers, an unusual and a not so typical species (*cinematis calibratis*), which can at times forget those closest to us given the distractions we can have.

Let us not forget to acknowledge the pivotal role our families, our parents and our children, play in our lives, our so-called 'creative' lives. We are, to all intents and purposes just normal, but there are those times when self absorption can take over and add a very heavy fog filter to what we are experiencing. Try as we might we often take the day home with us, and miss out on the welcomes from family, who are simply wanting us to feel comfortable in a familiar and safe environment... our home.

Considering we can spend so much time away from home in pursuit of career and and security, it is vital we remain connected to family and to friends for simple peace of mind.

We can miss the warning signals from those closest to us who have not had the best of days and also need some love and understanding. Missing these signals or signs can have negative outcomes, so best to remove the blinkers and have a clear view of the surroundings.

It was a different time, but when I started in our industry after failing dismally at school, a young man was encouraged to get a trade. Something I was not capable of, but I always had a love for the cinema and was making, with the help of my family, small 8mm films, which increased my love of the process. My parents were incredibly supportive and that made all the difference. So jump cut to 2021 and I remain forever grateful to mum, dad and my amazing brother; my family for their amazing support, which at times I am certain I was remiss in acknowledging.

It must be said that family and loved ones also keep you grounded and remind you of the values that will carry you through life and be able to deal with anything thrown at you.

Take time to publicly acknowledge those who support you and ask for nothing in return.

Until next time.

Ron Johanson OAM ACS
National President,
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HAVE CAMERA, WILL TRAVEL

South Australian Judd Overton talks about his crazy last year as a trans-pacific cinematographer, and the transition to 'Covid normal' productions - ***interview by Darcy Yuille***

Judd Overton (behind the camera) filming 'Ride the Eagle' on location - PHOTO John Platt

Like a lot of us these days, Overton and I meet online. He has a sunny beach behind him, courtesy of Zoom, even though he is actually located in Byron Bay.

AC **How does it feel to be shooting in Australia again?**

JO It's great. I've got a really lovely crew and we are shooting lots of fun stuff, a real challenge with great comedy, tons of action and lots of adventures. I'm loving it.

AC **A big difference from 2020?**

JO Absolutely. This time last year, it was shaping up to be a great time. I was in pre-production for *Ghosts*, a CBS network pilot. We had picked up the gear, the crew were on, we were ready to go. We were having a little celebratory lunch to say 'here we go' when the news came through and we had to shut down. Initially it was for two weeks but eventually turned into eleven months.

AC **What did you do?**

JO I went through a period of not knowing, basically waiting around in my apartment and wearing a mask and not going out, for two or three months. Dates kept getting pushed back. I had done a lot of pre-production on the fourth series of *No Activity* (Overton has filmed the previous Australian and US iterations of the show) and then that was shut down.

Luckily, when *No Activity* fell over, director Trent O'Donnell told me about a script he had called *Ride the Eagle* written with Jake Johnson. An independent film set in Yosemite. We set up a hub where everyone went through Covid protocols; basically five actors, single camera, minimal crew, all shot at a beautiful and Autumnal times of day. We got back to Los Angeles after a couple of weeks out of it in the mountains and it had all gone mental, Hollywood mental.

AC **Did you think about coming home?**

JO Absolutely, but then *No Activity* had a resurgence as an animation, and the team ended using a lot of my references because we had totally prepped the show and knew the ins and outs. I got to work on the show and share the lens choices, the lighting and coverage choices and all that sort of thing. Flight School Studio, the team who took on the animation, were very creative with how they maintained the improvisational style; sending iPads, lights and cameras to the actors so they could all interact live online with the director. It was a pretty interesting sidestep.

AC **Did you feel like things would be picking up?**

JO There was a lot of positivity, and everyone could see the demand the pandemic had created. I got a gig in Atlanta as cinematographer on *Young Rock* filming Dwayne Johnson for each episode. I spent two months on that, a lot of it was planning and working out how to integrate from transitions, flashbacks and different elements.

The show tells Johnson's life through three different actors, through three different periods, and the main unit shoot was in Brisbane with Martin McGrath ACS and Katie Milwright ACS. There was a lot of back-and-forth with the team in Australia. Showrunner Nahnatchka Khan flew out to Atlanta and we shot for three weeks working out a lot of visual effects, composite crowd scenes and the like. Because of Covid and restrictions on the number of people who could congregate and how, we'd be shooting one element of a scene on one day, then another on the next, and slowly cobbling everything together. A lot of logistics.

AC **Did things start to pick up once new shooting protocols came into place?**

JO Filmmaking is still big business in the United States. There was

Judd Overton's camera on location - PHOTO Supplied

no way they were not going to solve the problem of production, either through animation as in *No Activity* or through working out strong protocols. I was able to jump on the delayed network pilot for *Ghosts* after *Young Rock* and that took me through the rest of 2020. I'd already done all the pre-production, so we were well placed to shoot and the crew were amazing.

There were situations where a crew member would be exposed to the virus picking up gear, and that night you had to find a person to fill in, but for the most part this was rare and everyone did well to not go out and get in the way of the virus. It was tough because people were just doing what they had been used to doing for years, but the situation was risky. I'm very grateful for the crew on that project for working so hard to keep each other safe. *Ghosts* has just been picked up for season one, so that's encouraging.

After that, with the state of the world. I thought it was probably not a bad time to come home. Through my contacts shooting in the United States, I was able to get the current gig shooting a streaming show based out of Byron Bay.

AC What are the differences between shooting a network show versus a streaming show?

JO Network shows, the acquisition is still high-definition (HD), so there are less restrictions on cameras and less data obviously. When you start working with streaming services, they are all calling for high-dynamic range (HDR) and 4K acquisition at a minimum. The list of approved cameras is still quite small. I love using the Blackmagic URSA Mini 12K camera, but as it is new, I've had to do a lot of testing for Netflix. I've received approval to use it on the current project, and I think it will be a really good test case.

AC Have you been using the Blackmagic Mini URSA 12K on any of your other projects?

JO I've now used the URSA Mini 12K camera on two network shows, the feature film with O'Donnell and my latest show for Netflix. The advantages of the higher resolution are obvious for things such as visual effects plate work, however, I have also used the camera at a range of other resolutions, specifically 8K which offers a comparable data rate to the ARRI Alexa LF and 4K to shoot 120fps.

I've also used it to shoot stunts and action, where we often run multiple cameras. There is no 'one stop shop' when it comes to visual storytelling. I choose the right camera and lens package for every job but I do feel that with budgets and schedules decreasing, these cameras put a lot of creative power in the hands of the filmmakers. I also think Blackmagic have learned along the way. They've listened to filmmakers and I love that if I ever have a problem or a thought, I can go to them and share my ideas. There are also groups of cinematographers who have connected around the world. We share information and experiences about cameras and share gear when we need something.

AC Do you find any major differences between shooting in the U.S. vs Australia?

JO It's interesting. I used to operate a lot in Australia, but now when I shoot, I barely touch a camera, and I think that's one of the big differences. That is starting to change with the streaming services investment in drama. I also think the digital intermediate technician (DIT) role is still quite different. There are a few people who do the full service, grading on set and the like, but many are still operating as data wranglers. I think we have a way to go on developing this role. It's a great opportunity.

Judd Overton is an award-winning Australian cinematographer of film, television, commercial and documentary.

Darcy Yuille is an ongoing contributor to Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

GOLDEN PARADE

Australian cinematographer Ahmad Al Morsy films once-in-a-lifetime royal Egyptian parade broadcast live to millions of viewers around the world - ***by Vanessa Abbott***

The Pharaohs' Golden Parade - DOP Ahmad Al Morsy

AC **What exactly is the Golden Parade?**

AM The Pharaoh's Golden Parade is a journey of twenty-two royal Egyptian mummies including Kings Ramesses II, III, IV, V, VI and IX among others. The mummies gracefully travelled the streets of Egypt in parade from the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir to the National Museum of Egyptian Civilisation.

AC **How did you come to be the cinematographer behind this event?**

AM Being chosen to be the director and cinematographer behind an event as grand as this, was definitely an honour.

I had directed a commercial for the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities a few months back, inviting people to come back to Egypt after the Coronavirus pandemic. The campaign achieved great success, and since then the ministry officials and I have developed a mutual trust. That campaign also earned a Gold Award from the ACS in 2020.

AC **How was the job originally described to you as the person in charge of filming it?**

AM The job was described to me as the final journey of pharaohs, after thousands of years. That sentence itself is such a strong statement. It made me stand still for a moment. I was part of a team responsible for executing one of the biggest events to take place in this country. I was briefed by the team at a very early stage, and that was a good thing, because I had the chance to add my creative input from the very beginning.

AC **Can you talk a bit about your planning for the event?**

AM Planning this event was nothing less than hectic. Ideas were all over the place, so many possible situations, so many things to take into consideration and so many things to plan. We had countless brainstorming sessions with the whole team; choreography and styling, to graphics and production. Along with countless meetings with archeologists to be able to understand everything in detail and make sure that we are not taking a wrong direction. The team and I sat in several briefing sessions to be able to fully understand everything there is to know about these mummies and their history, and from that we started thinking of how we will tackle this artistically.

We knew from the very beginning that we need to tell a story through art. We tried to come up with one big umbrella as our concept, and from that everything else descended. We talked about locations, and what these locations represented, we talked about ancient symbols and how we can use these symbols to accommodate our event, we talked about modernising the ancient attire without being cliche or seeming old. Everything was accounted for, and that is why it took us nearly a year and a half to execute this project.

AC **Did the parade, and filming the parade, go as planned?**

AM Planning the parade was very different to the end result. When you start executing such a project you quickly realise that not everything you had planned turns out the way you had it pictured in your mind, and that was the case for every single person.

We watched this parade over a million times, and every time we watch it, we find things that we could do better, and so we go on and try to do better. This was the case for every department working; we all wanted something that would astound the world, and so we all worked towards this goal.

Looking back at the parade, I am actually very pleased with the final outcome, and would not have done anything differently. The team and I have been working for a very long time on this, and we made sure that everything that came out to the public was perfect.

However, I'm very excited to try out new techniques in upcoming projects, and take on bigger challenges in the future.

Ahmad Al Morsy is a multi-award winning cinematographer with over fifty feature films and over two-thousand television commercials under his belt.

SKY'S THE LIMIT

Buckle in and get ready to experience a new version of reality, a new era in drone technology has arrived - ***by Drew Wheeler***

Dale Henderson from Fluid Motion - PHOTO Supplied

While experiencing the edge of space is now a reality for billionaires, the new style of first person view (FPV) drones are making it possible for everyday people to experience a new realm of cinematic reality from the comfort of their lounge chairs on Earth.

Fluid Motion's Dale Henderson, the first in Australia to own and pilot this new 35mm aerial technology, says that it will redefine what's possible for the audience's experience and open a whole new world of opportunities for cinematographers alike.

This new style of drone flying takes away a lot of the state of the art technology that is integrated within the conventional GPS fixed drones, enabling the pilot who is flying the machine to fully unhinge into manual or 'fighter pilot' mode. As a FPV pilot, Henderson says it all starts from deep within the soul, from way back within your eye sockets, all the way down through to your fingertips with precise accuracy on the control sticks, and all of this done with a set of goggles strapped to your face. Think of it as manipulating a real F16 fighter jet in a virtual reality setup, but it's not a game, if the pilot crashes it's for real.

Once the machine is airborne the FPV pilot can perform exceptional manoeuvres that just aren't possible with today's conventional setups. Free-falling down cliffs, waterfalls, dive bombing buildings, car chases at high speeds, for example. While this drone may be way too much to handle for a seasoned GPS pilot with no FPV experience, the benefits with a fully trained and seasoned FPV pilot means the creativity brief from a director and cinematographer can create shots unlike anything seen before - and the recorded shot - well let's just say it definitely outweighs the obstacles involved to create that sense of flying. It's really just like you're in the cockpit. It, without a doubt, defies gravity to the nth degree and definitely adds another hyper dimension to the film critic. It also pays to have the right skilled pilot on board this machine to capture the imagery on set.

Before drones, directors and cinematographers' aerial footage was for a long time restricted to the use of helicopters or cranes up until early 2011. Henderson says, having the remote-piloted technology develop over the last ten years has enabled incredible shots to be created, and audiences today have come to expect to be dazzled by aerial footage, from big screen block busters, all the way through to low-budget corporates and documentaries.

Advancements in drone technology and camera capabilities have enabled the quality to continually improve and become more budget friendly for the finance restricted productions. Even the most budget conscious cinematographer can now try to include that spectacular opening aerial shot and create the high-quality footage to compliment a critical scene.

It's a whole new look and one that hasn't been achieved with jets or helicopters or conventional drones. Being able to fly around objects at high speeds and within arm's length dynamically, creates the off-axis horizon which definitely brings spectators into the mix. Viewers can now tell if a shot has been created with computer-generated imagery. Having a full frame 35mm camera pull incredible moves on set gives them a sense of reality, most importantly because it's real and hasn't been fabricated by computers.

Accomplishing shots in never before possible scenes like the one-and-a-half-minute-long drone shot filmed at a Minnesota bowling alley that recently went viral. This type of shot can't be achieved with conventional drones, as they are controlled by latitude and longitude GPS banding that affects the motion from moving from outside to inside with a jolt gliding effect, therefore affecting the shot. Pre-orchestrated shots like these take a lot of organising within the crew from brainstorming an idea to bringing it into a real-life reality shot. Basically, with the right creative minds behind an idea anything is possible.

The sky is no longer the limit for directors and cinematographers with this new dimension of flying FPV, the drone creative ideas can now become a reality.

Dale Henderson of Fluid Motion is an innovator and early adopter of aerial cinematography.

Drew Wheeler is a writer for Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

COUNTRY ROAD

Cinematographer Marcus Cropp talks about filming the latest campaign for iconic Australia brand Country Road - ***by James Cunningham***

A scene from Country Road's 'Layers That Matter' short film - DOP Marcus Cropp

Layers That Matter is a short film that makes up part of Country Road's latest campaign. It highlights Australian farmers and manufacturers which the brand is working with to make their garments better. Melbourne-based cinematographer Marcus Cropp was brought on to shoot this film for Country Road by director Ned Donohoe. ***"We have collaborated on a few other films for the brand over the past year and I was rapt to be asked again,"*** says Cropp.

The pitch was to shoot a documentary-style piece about the real people and the stories behind the Australian made materials that Country Road uses to create clothing. ***"The concept creator and art director Rupert Carr-Gregg referenced lots of beautiful medium-format film stills which I believe were taken by the photographer Saskia Wilson, who we also worked with on the campaign,"*** explains Cropp.

Cropp thought a photographic aspect ratio would suit the content nicely, and the cinematographer landed on 3:2 ratio with a more fluid, wider-lens feel. ***"There was a selection of in-situ farmers and Australian landscape shots, all with a golden, earthy tone,"*** he says. ***Short advertising film 'Good Wool by Theory'*** (director Steve Brahms and cinematographer Julian Kapadia) ***was also mentioned, though it was noted we were looking for a more relaxed and contemplative edit pace."***

The film, being a fairly traditional documentary in how it was set up, didn't use a production designer, or have story boards. ***"There were story points that we set out to capture, but rather than scripting anything we spent time with the interviewees and let situations play out between the characters in the locations they felt comfortable in,"*** says Cropp. ***"As someone coming from shooting lots of heavily boarded commercials it can be a nice departure to find your favourite moments on the day and follow those."***

The locations in the film, from the farms to the factory, are the actual locations where the cotton is grown and the clothes are made. ***"They are all the actual locations,"*** says Cropp. ***"We had received location information and stills from producer Skye Campbell, a local to one of the spots in Tasmania, and from the owners at each of the other places.***

Cropp wasn't able to a great deal of reconnaissance before hand, mainly a few hours on the day. ***"This could mean standing in the dark at 5am with a torch, the Sun Seeker and Artemis apps, or exploring a farm during the middle of the day, then sitting around waiting for the good light before shooting in the early evening,"*** he explains. ***"There's often a few key shots in a sequence I might find with Artemis or my stills camera beforehand, but at any given time we would follow the subjects through any surprise situations that occurred."***

A lot of Cropp's exteriors are filmed at sunrise, or sunset. The cinematographer wanted to show the magic and the work of what goes into creating these fibres and a lot of it does tend to happen early in the morning. ***"We just had it happen slightly earlier during the shoot for the really nice light and for the mist,"*** says Cropp.

"The restricted, muted colour palette of the dry hills in that light was a nice bonus. I think having such a small amount of available light did effect

A scene from Country Road's 'Layers That Matter' short film - DOP Marcus Cropp

the comfort of our subjects and the animals, and both were probably a bit more at home than if it had been later in the day. The largest work behind shooting at these times is convincing production to start very early, and to stop before the sun gets high. Luckily this was not a hard sell on our shoot and we used the middle of the days to travel or hit the local bakery. We did have a few moments where talent was on a roll, so we were shooting in less than ideal light, but that's a big part of documentary style shooting too."

The director wanted to incorporate a zoom out as a visual motif, and a way to tie the different locations and stories together. *Layers That Matter* was filmed with the ARRI Alexa Mini LF, Cooke S7i Primes and the Fujinon Premista 28-100. ***"I like the Cooke S7i lenses because they are a nice combination of high image quality and organic feel, not too sharp, so perfect for our subject matter,"*** says Cropp.

"For hand-held, I prefer a slightly heavier lens such as the Cookes, not just for the centre of gravity of the build but also to be able to operate in a controlled and smooth way. The Cooke 32mm was the primary lens for any handheld scenes. The Premista is a lens I have used many times because of the excellent image quality and versatility, however we did need to take the edge off that one with a Glimmerglass."

The camera department consisted only of Cropp as cinematographer and fellow cinematographer Roderick Th'ng as the film's focus puller. ***"Th'ng would switch between looking at the monitor and moving around with an operator depending on the situation, so even when something off the cuff happened we were never caught out for sharps,"*** says Cropp. ***"I did have a few floppies, an unbleached muslin bounce and some small LED lights in the kit for this, but I knew from the outset it was unlikely we would use them, given the documentary-style nature of the shoot."***

Cropp wasn't largely involved in post-production, however the director shared with him the various edits as they came in. ***"Abe Wynen from Crayon did the grade, I have worked with him many times and he always brings something special to a project,"*** says Cropp. ***"After seeing the project and treatment this time, Wynen brought the paintings of Australian impressionists Frederick McCubbin and Arthur Streeton into the reference mix, and took the grade to a really great place with those in mind."***

One of Cropp's favourite shots is one of the quicker shots in the film. ***"The shot of Robyn*** (one of the main subjects of the film) ***planting trees by the river with her family is my favourite,"*** he says. ***"It tells her story, and shows a part of her wry sense of humour as she banters with her grandchildren."***

Looking back, the cinematographer would probably have loved to spend more time lighting things, but it probably wouldn't have worked with how the project ran. ***"There is one thing I would definitely change though; I got a dodgy breakfast wrap in a small town on the way to set early one morning, it made me so sick I was almost unable to film… never again!"***

Marcus Cropp is a cinematographer working in Melbourne and Hobart. He was awarded Gold at the Victorian ACS Awards in 2019 for his work on Pant Active's 'We Like Strong'.

PHOTOGRAMMETRY

Mark Ruff deploys unique Avatar Factory technology on *Mortal Kombat* (2021) and other dynamic film and television projects - ***by Tanya Thomson***

Mark Ruff and his crew inside the Avatar Factory - PHOTO Supplied

Specialising in the creation of three-dimensional avatars and cyber-scanning for the feature film and broadcast industry, The Avatar Factory uses over one-hundred and forty high-resolution 24-megapixel cameras, alongside an additional six 50-megapixel DSLR cameras. It uses 'photogrammetry' to capture photo-realistic three-dimensional models in an instant.

It's a one-of-a-kind mobile rig developed and owned by Australian and long-time ACS member, Mark Ruff, who in 2002 received the ACS Ross Wood Award for Innovation and Advancement of Cinematography and also the ACS Miller Award for Technical Achievement in 2019.

Capture is instant and takes just twenty seconds to download a take. A check of the images takes just a few minutes more, and talent is consumed by just a few minutes of their time.

Ruff has been working with multiple cameras since 1999. His first build in 1999 utilised sixty analogue cameras to explore 'bullet time' effects. ***"It was a proud moment,"*** says Ruff, who displayed his system for the first time to the ACS at Lemac in 2001. ***"All I could do was fire the shutter,"*** Ruff goes on to say. ***"As impressive as this sound was, with a 10-millisecond delay between cameras, the results took about a week."***

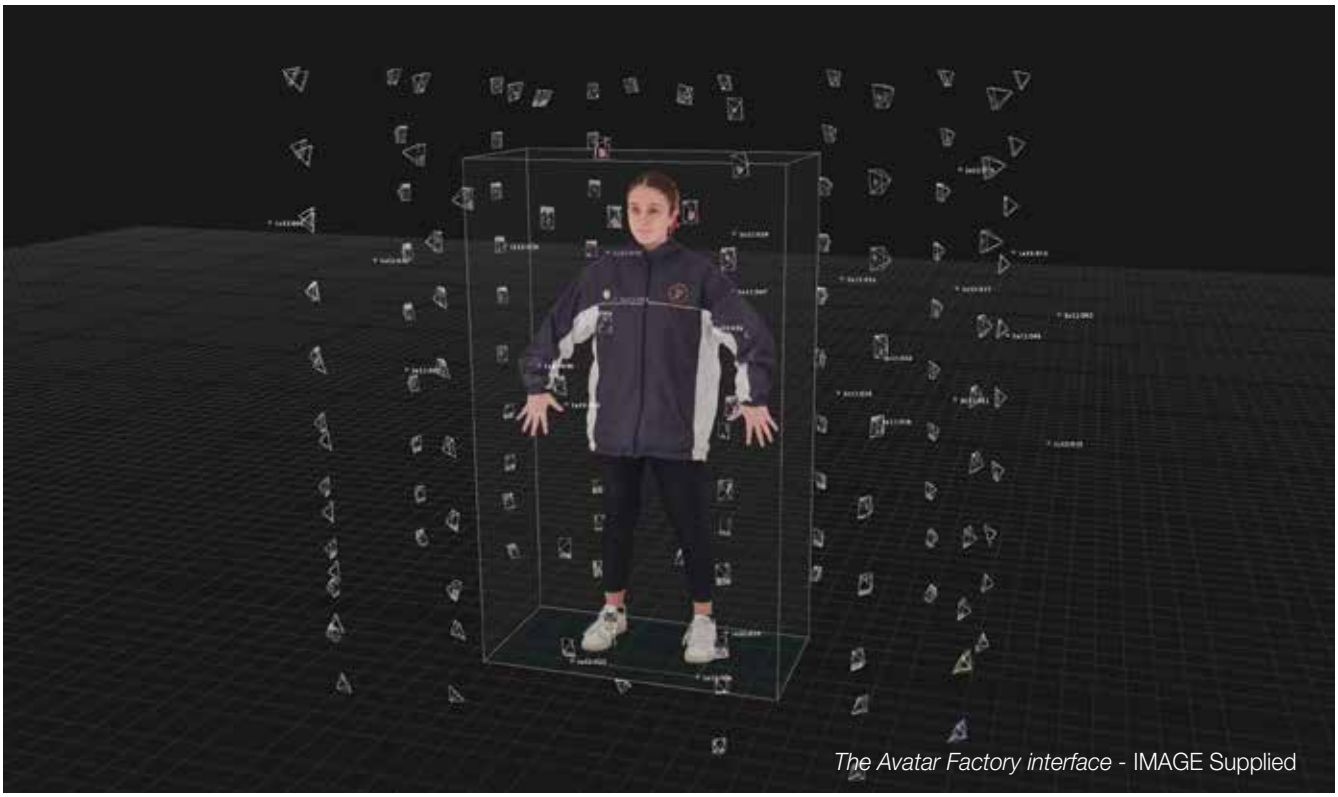
Then came version two. Digital cameras. Turnaround was just one-hour compared with the one-week from Ruff's first attempt. His version three build, using second-generation digital technology, just fifteen-seconds versus one-hour. Ruff was looking ahead at the business model of three-dimensional avatars, body scanning and digital doubles and he believed there was a future in this style of image making. ***"And there was,"*** he says.

When Ruff was commissioned to work on Alex Proyas' *Gods of Egypt* in 2015, the visual effects department inquired if he could provide digital doubles. ***"Give me a couple of weeks,"*** he replied. But that 'couple of weeks' turned out to be nine months of research and development. ***"Back then there were few resources, so, it was like reinventing the wheel."***

How is it done? Multiple cameras capture a subject, then specially designed software detects common features across all the images. Each feature becomes a 'vertex point' and multiple vertex points make a triangle. A final capture with around one-hundred-and-fifty cameras creates a three-dimensional 'mesh' as high as 100 million triangles. The photographic component is then laid over the mesh. The result is a photo-realistic, three-dimensional model. In the world of 3D, you are no longer working with a 'burnt in' two-dimensional image. One of Ruff's avatars can then be re-lit and animated.

Last year, Ruff was able to achieve very flat lighting for *Mortal Kombat* (cinematography by Germain McMicking ACS) as well as another big-budget film recently shot on the Gold Coast. For *Mortal Kombat,* a 6x6x3-meter white cube, where light was bounced off all the walls, was incorporated with pleasant results. ***"Flatter than flat,"*** says Ruff. Enter 'cross polarisation', technique used by still photographers to eliminate specular highlights off the brush strokes of oil paintings on canvas.

Most cinematographers will understand the concept of 'polarisation' whereby a filter is used to reduce the phases of light. This helps in darkening blue skies,



The Avatar Factory interface - IMAGE Supplied

reducing reflections off windscreens of cars or simply making driving more pleasurable with polarised glasses. 'Cross polarisation' goes one step further. The light source is polarised, and the subject is polarised.
The result is that only the 'diffuse' or reflected light from the subject enters the camera. Ideally, the incidental light that strikes the subject is invisible to the camera. Important when you are covering a subject over 360-degrees.

"It looks a bit odd since the light illuminating the subject from behind is near black," says Ruff. ***"It is used in photogrammetry to eliminate the specular highlights of skin at the pore level and even out the reflective properties of fabrics. Since the incident light is mostly invisible, there is minimal flare."***

"When a three-dimensional person or object is photographed, you do not want anything such as light to get in the way," explains Ruff. ***"I know, it sounds absurd, light, getting in the way of image making. But a correct texture holds the information of the subject, and it appears black until you put light on it. This is just like the real world; a subject with no light appears black. If the texture is contaminated by light that originally lit the subject, then the texture is compromised. A highlight or reflection may exist where you do not want a highlight."***

Marvel films, and the like, use a three-dimensional avatar to preform seemingly unreal stunts. The avatar must match the original as close as possible since we may see both in the same or consecutive shot.***"Three-dimensional avatars are not 'born' to replace actors, rather to extend a performance,"*** says Ruff.

Whilst working on *Mortal Kombat*, Ruff had to relocate the set up to be closer to production. At that time there were eighty-four cameras. ***"It was an effort to rig and de-rig, involving a half day to strike and a further day to rig, but, we did it,"*** says Ruff.

When it came to filming another project on the Gold Coast there were more than one-hundred-and-forty cameras.

Even with a third assistant it was just not feasible to set up such a complex environment for one day. It was then that Ruff knew his only solution was to have a mobile set up. Enter a single-axle fifteen-tonne truck almost eleven meters long. Inside the truck is divided in half, with computer workstations and a booth with all the cameras setup to capture a subject.

"The total time imposed to talent is less than five minutes, which includes instruction on how to pose, taking the exposure and a check of the images," says Ruff. On a recent feature film, the team took just 75 seconds from instruction to check and clear. ***"We were able to achieve up to 120 scans in around 180 minutes in a single session. Exhausting!"***

Ruff's Avatar Factory now extends to his entire family with Kate Ruff responsible for data logging and wrangling, Chloe Ruff greeting and instructing talent and Amy Ruff slates and documents talent.

By the time of publication, Ruff hopes to have version three underway which includes pattern projection.

Mark Ruff is a proud member of the ACS.

Tanya Thompson is a contributor to Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

START SHOOTING

Focus is essential to telling the visual story and leading an audience's eye.

Simply put, this core element sits firmly at the heart of filmmaking. The longstanding challenge has been, how to create fast, reliable and cinematic autofocus when the camera is set to movie mode, and it is this area of innovation where Sony has developed autofocus capabilities for filmmaking unlike anything before.

Powered by the next generation dual BIONZ XR Imaging Processors, faster processing and smarter artificial intelligence are paired to achieve rich and reliable cinematic autofocus. Whether in backlit scenes or at an extremely shallow depth-of-field, Sony's autofocus system calculates textures, pattern, and distance in real-time.

Sony sets the new standard on-set with faster turnarounds, powered by autofocus.

Fast and reliable AF should support the director's creative vision.

Reliability and speed of autofocus is only one aspect of the demands from filmmakers. Focus needs to match the director's intent for the scene. With this in mind, Sony has developed it's autofocus system with dynamic expression. Autofocus Transition Speed and Subject Shift Sensitivity can be controlled between different tolerance levels. When a slow focus pull is needed, simply change these parameters then touch the rear LCD screen on the camera to execute focus shift between two points*. This action is easily repeatable and incredibly accurate for greater control while recording in the moment or speeding up reset times while working on-set.

Every moment on-set matters.

Sony has developed it's autofocus system with intuitive assists to speed up shot preparation. Touch Tracking is the perfect option to overcome the challenge of focusing on fast-moving subjects by simply touching the LCD screen while tracking is enabled*. When the camera is in manual focus, autofocus can be engaged as an assist to find sharp focus, then reverts to manual focus. Human eye autofocus is achievable in all resolutions and frame rates allowing dramatic images to be reliably captured where traditional manual focus was not an option.

	Cinema line FX6	Alpha 1	Cinema Line FX3	Alpha 7S III
Max resolution & Frame rate	DCI4K 120p	8K 30p	UHD 4K 120p	UHD 4K 120p
Real-time Eye AF	✓	✓	✓	✓
AF Transition speed & Subj. Shift Sens.	✓ 7 speeds/5 speeds	✓ 7 speeds/5 speeds	✓ 7 speeds/5 speeds	✓ 7 speeds/5 speeds
Touch Tracking		✓	✓	✓
MF touch assist	✓	✓	✓	✓
Focus ring subject selection	✓			
Video outputs	12G-SDI / HDMI	HDMI	HDMI	HDMI

Cinema Line FX6.

The FX6 camera provides a professional-compact solution for cinematographers and filmmakers. With the same BIONZ XR image processors and real-time processing as the Alpha 1, Alpha 7S III and FX3, many of these already mentioned autofocus features carry over to the FX6. Face detection and eye autofocus are available in all resolutions and frames rates, along with the autofocus assist functions. Cinematic autofocus expression is also available through adjustable AF Transition Speeds and Subject Shift Sensitivity. Unique to the FX6 is the ability to use the focus ring on the lens for Subject Selection (a method of AF selection when numerous people are in the scene) while using autofocus. When used in conjunction with the other autofocus assist features, the powerful Subject Select function allows for true single-camera operation with accurate and sharp focus while creating dramatic focus pulls between subjects.

Lenses designed with movie autofocus in mind.

Designed with a deep knowledge of the autofocus capabilities from Sony Alpha cameras, Sony E-Mount lenses are the natural choice when filming to capture exceptional autofocus responsiveness and accuracy. The epitome of Sony's E-Mount lenses is the G Master series; lenses which have been optically tested to meet the highest demands of professionals by effectively eliminating many undesired aberrations, colour fringing and artifacts such as ghosts and lens flares. Sony has developed the unparalleled XD (eXtreme Dynamic) Linear Motors for the G Master series. This AF motor delivers high thrust efficiency with near-silent performance – a must-have when filming on set and recording audio.

Visit **sony.com.au/cameras** to learn more.

This article outlines the autofocus movie mode functions found on the: FX6, FX3, Alpha 1, and Alpha 7S III

**LCD Touch Screen Function excludes FX6*

NITRAM

Focusing on events leading up to the 1996 Port Arthur massacre in Tasmania, Justin Kurzel's ***Nitram*** is filmed by cinematographer **Germain McMicking ACS**.

- by James Cunningham

Caleb Landry Jones in 'Nitram'- DOP Germain McMicking ACS, PHOTO Ben Saunders

Caleb Landry Jones in 'Nitram'- DOP Germain McMicking ACS, PHOTO Ben Saunders

Nitram is the new Australian drama directed by Justin Kurzel (*Snowtown, True History of the Kelly Gang*) focusing on the events that lead to the Port Arthur massacre in Tasmania in 1996 which left 35 people dead.

The film stars Caleb Landry Jones as Nitram, alongside two-time Academy Award nominated Judy Davis and Anthony LaPaglia. *Nitram* premiered at the this year's Cannes Film Festival where Jones won Best Actor for his performance. The film does not depict the actual mass shooting, nor does it refer to the killer, Martin Bryant, by name. Nitram is Martin spelled backwards.

Cinematographer Germain McMicking ACS has been carving out an impressive career, shooting films such as the acclaimed *Holding the Man* in 2015, *Berlin Syndrome* in 2017, the third season of HBO series *True Detective* in 2019 for which he was Emmy-nominated for Outstanding Cinematography for a Limited Series, and most recently Simon McQuoid's *Mortal Kombat* in 2020.

McMicking's involvement in *Nitram* was born through the local film rumour mill. ***"I had heard from some crew friends that Justin Kurzel was searching far and wide for a cinematographer for his new film, and that I should hit him up,"*** explains McMicking. ***"To be honest, I've never been all that fond of this approach. But I was really interested in working with him. He's an incredible director. I knew the subject matter would be challenging and would draw some great cast and other talented collaborators."***

The cinematographer put his shyness aside and called Kurzel. ***"It was quite an amusing and humbling conversation,"*** says McMicking. ***"I clearly remember him saying 'In all honesty I hadn't even thought of you, but yeah it could be really interesting'."***

"The initial hit to my ego put aside I laughed, and let Kurzel know how keen I'd be to see the script," he says. ***"I read Shaun Grant's fantastic text, loved it and spent some time discussing the themes and characters with Kurzel and things progressed from there."***

Kurzel wasn't keen to reference any other films specifically, or to set too much in stone from the outset, but for the look of *Nitram* to develop fairly organically. ***"I do remember his desire to approach the film from almost two seemingly different perspectives, to visually hold a strong sense of reality and somewhat the feeling of a fable,"*** explains McMicking. ***"He wanted the film to be both very beautiful, but roughly hewn and fragile all the same."***

Through their discussions, Kurzel spoke a lot about how to evoke the feeling of the era of 1990s Australia and Hobart, and the pair looked at all manner of Australian stills photography of the time such as the the work of Warren Kirk, Rennie Ellis, and the incredible suburban landscapes of Bill Henson.

"We talked about colour and light, and poured through some beautiful textural references production designer Alice Babidge put together, but mostly we just spoke about the script and character and what he wanted each scene to feel like," says McMicking.

"I think together as we kept discussing the film, the less we found ourselves gravitating toward having any really set rules about the cinematography," he says. ***"It wasn't like 'this is a handheld film' or 'this is all on sticks', it was more***

Caleb Landry Jones in a scene from 'Nitram'- DOP Germain McMicking ACS, PHOTO Ben Saunders

intuitive and born out of a response to the performances and environment."

Having said that, McMicking explains that there is somewhat of a shift in camera language throughout the film. ***"Earlier in the story we are generally more handheld, and the camera often feels physically closer to the characters, being drawn through their environments with them. Later in the film the camera slows down and becomes more formal, and observed, with more dolly, crane and static compositions."***

Kurzel along with producers Nick Batzias and Virginia Whitwell, all achieved a minor miracle in getting the film up and running. *Nitram* was filmed in November of 2020 during a Melbourne lockdown. As Geelong was outside Melbourne's 'ring of steel', they team were able to set up a production hub for the crew at a local conference centre and have the entire cast and crew live together, separated from the local community.

"The production schedule was fairly short being just twenty-four days across four weeks," says McMicking. ***"The shoot felt fast, which added a fantastic energy to it. I guess that all of that influenced the cinematographic approach. Our set ups needed to be fairly simple, or if they had some element of complication to them we had to be incredibly well-prepared. As things invariably change, the crew had to be ready to shift gears very quickly."***

McMicking continues, ***"After only day one we all discovered how nimble we needed to be. I remember our very first shot was to be a somewhat simple doorway scene of Nitram (Caleb Landry Jones) meeting Helen (Essie Davis) for the first time. Somehow it developed into a shot which followed the characters throughout the entire length of the house, combining three scenes into one. It certainly set the tone for things, and fortunately it all fell into place very quickly. We had an incredible crew."***

A strong collaboration with the film's production design team was integral. McMicking and production designer Alice Babidge would discuss their thoughts on everything from window dressings and colours, particular practicals and the qualities of their light, and to Babidge's thoughts on the positioning of furniture or objects in a room.

"Babidge is a bit of a genius and took on the roles of both costume and production design on the film. No small feat," says the cinematographer, who had the pleasure of working with Babidge on the *Holding The Man* where she was costume designer. The pair would back-and-forth about the potential blocking of a scene with Kurzel, about ideas on where the light would fall and where they hoped characters would go.

"Her work on the film was nuanced and layered, and always driven by reality and story," says McMicking. ***"Babidge and her incredible team put together a rich visual reference document, displaying the vision for the period, colour and texture. This was all up on the walls of a large central conference room in the production hub, so all of us could swing by and look at stuff and be inspired, and consolidate the vision."***

Besides one stunt sequence, nothing in the film was story-boarded. Everything else was shot-listed early on in initial phone and Zoom calls with the director, then applied and expanded once locations were found. ***"I think this was quite key to successfully navigating a short pre-production and***

Anthony LaPaglia as Nitram's father in 'Nitram'- DOP Germain McMicking ACS, PHOTO Ben Saunders

shoot time," says McMicking. ***"Prior to scouting we already had a strong idea of how the scenes would be covered, and the kind of spaces we were looking for compositionally and emotionally. Of course this could all be thrown out the window if something new and more interesting was revealed through the process of blocking and shooting."***

During pre-production, Kurzel had spoken about his love for the visual qualities of super-16mm film, and the feeling that it could suit *Nitram*. McMicking did some genuine investigation into whether it would be possible, but unfortunately at the time Neglab in Sydney couldn't facilitate, as they couldn't access the necessary chemicals from the United States due to Covid.

"We tested a number of different digital cameras and formats at our two main locations in Geelong," says McMicking. ***"The ARRI Alexa Mini in super-16mm mode, with super-16mm lenses was really interesting to us, especially on closer shots. However we felt the resolution fell apart too much on our wider landscapes. We also tested Alexa Large-Format with H-Series glass, which although beautiful and immersive, felt a little too resolved and fought against the period feeling we were looking for."***

Ultimately the Alexa Mini S35 felt like it had the right balance of resolution and texture. ***"We coupled it with a set of vintage Panavision Ultra Speeds, which are beautiful and lyrical,"*** says McMicking. ***"There's a certain softness and character to them, and I love the way they open up the shadows and bring some interesting halation to the highlights. The smaller form factor and weight of the Alexa Mini also allowed for the more instinctual following of performance when shooting handheld."***

One unexpected aspect which came out of camera tests was how Kurzel and McMicking were drawn to the unusual 1.55:1 aspect ratio, which utilises the full sensor of the Alexa Mini at 3.4K. ***"So many of the suburban landscapes we had referenced from the time were 35mm stills, and we loved how the increased vertical space held so well,"*** says McMicking. ***"Then as we scouted locations we found that so many of our locations just felt better captured within that 1.55:1 aspect ratio. We also loved how it tended to centralise our characters more and poetically hold the air above them."***

McMicking sourced a number of domestic camcorders of the time, which Nitram (Jones) begins to use to document aspects of his life. ***"This was so much harder than I had imagined,"*** he says. ***"So many of the thirty-year-old Hi8 and Video8 cameras have hit a stage where they are completely falling apart, but eventually we found some options that worked. It was worth it in the end as I don't think you can really recreate that 'quality' in post-production. It's pretty unique."***

Cam Gaze was the focus puller on *Nitram*. ***"That was a really tough gig on this film, as many of the scenes were filmed unrehearsed, and often my camera movements or reactions to performance were totally different between takes,"*** says McMicking. ***"This with fast lenses and often low light would've been a nightmare. Gaze took it in his stride and he did an incredible job. We've worked together forever, all the way back to the film* Hail *(2011), so we have a great shorthand. His team who were also an incredible support were second assistant camera Jensen Cope alongside data wrangler and video split operator Darcy Gooding."***

Judy Davis as Nitram's mother in 'Nitram'- DOP Germain McMicking ACS, PHOTO Ben Saunders

"Simon Hawkins was our key grip, also amazing," says McMicking. ***"Although the film is fairly handheld, it has some quite intricate dolly, crane camera movements throughout. Hawkins managed to pull off at least one massive build per day with his limited team of himself, Kieran King and James Royle-Young. It was really impressive."***

Nitram was entirely shot on location in and around the city of Geelong and Winchelsea. Locations were mostly suburban, with country environments standing in for a 'feeling' of Hobart in the 1990s. ***"A location will pretty clearly speak as to the motivation, texture and colour of the lighting, as do aspects of the production design such as practicals, window treatments, curtains, but most importantly the mood and feeling of the light is based on story and character,"*** says McMicking.

The two key locations in *Nitram* are the starkly opposed worlds of Nitram's parents house and that of Helen (Essie Davis) the introverted Tattersalls heiress who befriends and takes in Nitram. ***"We wanted the parent's house to have quite an austere and impenetrable feeling to it,"*** says McMicking.

"It's sombre and very plain and neutral in its lighting. We approached it quite simply and mostly bounced large HMI sources or Sky Panel LED fixtures off bleached muslins or Ultra bounce, and through curtains that Babidge had dressed in. There were barely any floor lights or practicals within this location, which also helped facilitate some quite complicated handheld sequences following Caleb Landry Jones and Judy Davis, Nitram's mother, in continuous takes throughout various rooms in the house."

Helen's house had a very different approach to lighting. ***"It's grand and eccentric. Full of life, beauty and possibility,"*** he says. ***"We found an amazing 19th century mansion out in the countryside, which we all fell in love with. It was oozing with texture and had these incredibly over scaled rooms and windows."***

"I knew the subject matter would be challenging and would draw some great cast and other talented collaborators."

Initially, during the day Helen's house is full of light. For these day scenes the cinematographer poured a single source either an ArriMax 18K or a 20K tungsten fresnel on a knuckle boom through one of the mansion's large windows, before rounding things off simply with some passive fill. ***"It was always a fairly simple approach,"*** he says. ***"Later, as Nitram's world breaks down, the windows are more curtained and the light more contained with the corners of the room falling away into shadow."***

Kurzel and McMicking both felt that Helen's world at night should have a 'womb like' feel. The lighting for these scenes was very practical or motivated from the practicals designed in the space. ***"We mostly used practicals, or lite-mat fixtures through lace, or unbleached muslin to soften or break up the quality of the light and keep things warm,"*** says McMicking ***"Crispian Hayler was our gaffer, who I've also been working with forever. He was great at doggedly pursuing the aspiration to always keeping the light textural***

Essie Davis as Helen in 'Nitram'- DOP Germain McMicking ACS, PHOTO Ben Saunders

and emotional. His crew of Simon Zagami, Tony Iaria, and Dan Coates were equally fantastic and focused."

Making this film wasn't easy for cast or crew. The tragic events of Port Arthur twenty-five years on are still very raw for so many Australians. ***"During production, we all faced criticism for our involvement in the film,"*** explains McMicking. ***"But we had all read Grant's script, and intimately knew of Kurzel and the producers' intentions, and the important message they were trying to communicate. I was comfortable in my choice to be involved and stand by it, and am incredibly proud of the final result."***

Besides all the controversy surrounding the production, there were moments personally for the cinematographer which were incredibly challenging. ***"I felt that I had to at times find a way to remove myself from the inevitability of the story, but that of course is very tough,"*** he says. ***"Given the intimacy of the filming process with Jones, I felt I had to constantly try to be in the present and disassociate from the hideous ultimate end. To revile his character from the outset just wouldn't have worked. It felt that to find some understanding of the events you had to engage the present character with respect and humanity, until he begins to cross that line."***

"I think one of the most traumatic and difficult moments for me was a scene where you witness the sheer mass of weapons Nitram has accumulated, and what it ultimately meant. I think for a lot of the crew it was a fairly gut wrenching moment."

Working with Jones was an incredible experience, and highlight for McMicking. The actor is perhaps best know for his performances as the superhero Banshee in *X-Men: First Class* (2011) and alongside Francis McDormand in *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri* (2017). ***"Jones' performance in the film is truly remarkable,"*** says McMicking.

"I feel we worked together really well, and we very quickly fell into a rhythm. Kurzel was keen to allow Jones as much freedom as possible, and so in the earlier sections of the film we had the camera stick to him, and react and respond to him as intuitively as possible."

One particularly challenging and rewarding scene stands out, where Nitram returns home to pack his things up and clear out, much to the confusion of his parents, played by Davis and LaPaglia. ***"It was a great scene where the handheld camera follows the various characters through different rooms of the house in the middle of a conversation which develops into an argument,"*** explains McMicking.

"I remember that no two takes were the same, and the camera was free to play to the varying performances and perspectives of the different characters. There was no conversation about who was on or off screen, as it was possible for anyone at any time. The cast were completely present throughout, and it all felt so real. The entire cast were outstanding and performances were all equally mind-blowing."

McMicking was lucky enough to be at the grade for some time on *Nitram*. They primarily focused on the projected version of the film, as this was Kurzel's priority, and then graded the HDR version from that reference. "***Edel Rafferty worked as our colourist, and her work was outstanding,"*** says McMicking.

Caleb Landry Jones and Essie Davis in a scene from 'Nitram'- DOP Germain McMicking ACS, PHOTO Ben Saunders

"I've known and worked with Rafferty for many years in commercials, but this was our first feature project together. I've always loved what she visually brings to any project. We spent some time building a show LUT based off camera tests we shot at some key locations prior to the shoot. There's a certain softness and texture to her work which feels very human, and for me connects emotionally."

Working with the material at hand was Kurzel and McMicking's focus for determining the final look of *Nitram*. ***"We didn't stray too far from what was captured on the day, and the LUT developed early on,"*** he says. ***"I feel the grade was more about recognising what worked emotionally in the images at hand, and then subtly working with those to balance them, and carry the look of the film throughout."***

McMicking was interested in finding a world through which held a sense of nostalgia, and distinctly Australian time and space. ***"I think the closest film stock I could compare the look to would be something captured on the old 5229 500T Expression film stock,"*** he explains. ***"The final images rendered with softer blacks and more neutral colours, a look as though printed on paper."*** Post-production work was completed at Soundfirm in Melbourne.

"This film was such a privilege to work on and I adore it, so it's hard to pin point a single scene or shot as a favourite. But two scenes do come to mind," explains McMicking. ***"The gun shop scene is remarkable, where Nitram manages to buy an array of high-powered weapons with no more authority than a bag of cash. There's something so understated about the performances in this scene, and matter of fact as to what is transpiring. Juxtaposed with the ultimate fatality of this story, it's an incredibly powerful and tragic scene."***

"Another scene I'd note is a very small one with Nitram and Helen playing with her menagerie of dogs on the front lawn in the late summer sun. There's a tenderness and intimacy between the couple which is so beautiful, and offers a sense of hope and possibility. It's a heart-breaking moment as you almost forget about the inevitability that's to come."

The team behind *Nitram* set out to treat the subject matter with respect and care, and an abundance of artistic curiosity was a key priority for all involved.

"I feel that we captured some incredible performances, and made a great film which hopefully further stimulates the discussion on gun control in Australia, and ensure that this terrible event in our history isn't forgotten or ultimately repeated," says McMicking.

Nitram received it's Australian premier at this year's Melbourne International Film Festival. The film will be theatrically released in Australia on 30 September, before a later release on the Australian streaming service Stan.

McMicking has just completed work on the new television series *Wolf Like Me* for Made Up Stories and director Abe Forsythe.

Germain McMicking ACS is an internationally acclaimed and Emmy-nominated cinematographer, earning Best Cinematography at the Sundance Film Festival in 2015 for his work on the film *Partisan*.

James Cunningham is editor of Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

LONE WOLF

In a near-future Melbourne marked by state corruption and constant surveillance, a group of small-time activists hatch a plan to commit a 'victimless atrocity' in ***Lone Wolf,*** from Milli Award-winning cinematographer **Geoffrey Simpson ACS.**

- by Geoffrey Simpson ACS

Hugo Weaving in 'Lone Wolf' - DOP Geoffrey Simpson ACS

Director Jonathan Ogilvie, actor Hugo Weaving and cinematographer Geoffrey Simpson ACS with gaffer Richard Turton and key grip Brian Pribble - PHOTO Supplied

I have known director Jonathan Ogilvie since we worked together on *The Tender Hook* in 2007. That filmmaking experience was terrific, shot in Melbourne though set in Sydney, we had a superb cast headed by Rose Byrne and Hugo Weaving. A great shoot.

Ogilvie and I have kept in touch, seeing each other socially over the years and so his plans for this film were around for quite a while before it finally all came together in winter of 2019. This film is based on Joseph Conrad's novel The Secret Agent written in 1907. It has been popular with filmmakers ever since.

Alfred Hitchcock made a movie called *Sabotage* in 1936, based on the book. In 1992 it was made into a television series. Then as a film in 1996, staring Bob Hoskins, Patricia Arquette, Gerard Depardieu and a young Christian Bale. In 2016 another television miniseries was made and then the Jonathan Ogilvie version comes along, this time with a twist.

Ogilvie's idea was to have the story told via police security cameras, existing surveillance cameras, wire tapped telephones and hacked computers. The film would start and finish where we see the Police Minister played by Hugo Weaving, speaking with the police involved in the secret collection of various conversations and activities. The police show Weaving's character the entire story told totally by these clandestine techniques.

We filmed a 'proof of concept' a couple of years before the shoot to show investors how the film would work. A recent Sundance success at the time was Aneesh Chaganty's film *Searching* (2018, cinematography by Juan Sebastian Baron). Actor John Cho plays the father of a missing daughter, and the film is largely shot via her laptop computer. This success possibly helped pave the way for *Lone Wolf.*

I enjoyed the challenges faced in making this film. It was an interesting script with an incredible cast including Tilda Cobham Hervey, Josh McConville, Chris Bunton, Diana Glen, Stephen Curry, Tyler Coppin, Marlon Williams and of course Hugo Weaving mentioned earlier.

Certainly considered a 'low budget' film, we had only four weeks to shoot and found me sharing an Airbnb with the director in freezing Melbourne. Our first Wednesday there was the coldest day ever recorded. Once we had all four cameras set up it should have moved quickly, or so we thought.

The film opens and closes with Weaving and some of his senior police. The plan had always been to have a big difference between the 'bookends' and the body of the film being the surveillance footage. It seemed obvious to go widescreen, 1:1.39 anamorphic then 16:9 for the rest of the film to give us this difference.

We used the smart phone vertical format a couple of times which drives me nuts. Call me old fashioned, but the entire planet uses landscape format for television screens, movie screens and computer screens. People! Turn the telephone on its side and stop television showing vertical pictures with out of focus sides!

I already owned a small Blackmagic Pocket camera which was a good size for low-profile work, but not enough pixels for distribution. The new 4K Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera had recently arrived so we talked to Lemac and they purchased four of them especially for *Lone Wolf*. We shot Blackmagic RAW 4K DCI 4096 x 2160 and used Zeiss Compact Primes with an adapter for the Blackmagic mount. This made the camera a similar size to say a Canon 5D.

The Anamorphic work was shot with a set of Cooke

Tilda Cobham-Hervey as Winnie in 'Lone Wolf' - DOP Geoffrey Simpson ACS, PHOTO Supplied

Anamorphic Prime lenses on an ARRI Alexa Mini, also shooting RAW.

We wanted to get good quality images so we could muck about with them in post-production. Using visual effects creating grain, noise and other artefacts had been talked about. This in tandem with dirty glass in front of the lens to create the feeling of broken glass, paint or dirt, used mainly on exterior cameras.

Our production designer was Beth Ryan who I had worked with doing some commercials earlier in Sydney. Ryan was fantastic and achieved a lot for very little money. Our main set piece or location was a disused pornographic shop taken over by some wannabe radical socialist environmentalists who still sell porn as well, because it makes more money than their Marxist Leninist books.

Every time I rang our producers Mat Govoni or Adam White I would always ask, *"how are we going with the porn shop location?" "Still working on it,"* came the reply. Ryan was a champion and just did not give up until she found the perfect location. It was on a corner in Lygon Street, with two stories, so our main characters lived above and had a kitchen out the back. This just perfect for what the script required. The place was a wreck with leaks in the roof, but it meant we could paint and dress to our heart's content. Trams ran past outside to give another dimension, especially to our exterior night work.

The colour pallet was worked out with Ogilvie and Ryan and bold colours were chosen. Red and black for the bookshop and orange and blue for their living spaces out the back. We tested the colour during pre-production.

Ogilvie had done some storyboards, but only for a few scenes. He had a couple of painting references. One in particular, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* by Édouard Manet, stood out and became a big part of Ryan's set. The painting features a bar maid in front of a large mirror. There has been much written about this painting and Manet's struggle with reality and illusion, especially as photography had recently been invented and this painting does not seem to be a realistic point-of-view.

For us, this painting gave Ogilvie the idea for using the reflection as part of our set, so with a single camera we could see Winnie (played by Tilda Codham Hervey) standing behind the bookshop counter looking out towards the camera. Then when Ossipee (played by Marlon Williams) enters and acts like a sleaze bag, the audience can see both faces at once. Actual Winnie and the reflection of Ossipon. And sometime his profile. This is my favourite scene in *Lone Wolf*. Angelo Sartore, first assistant camera, made great decisions on where to focus. The actors looked like they were totally in character and their characters were really having fun. They knew how to play for the camera. A profile two-shot helped editing by being added to the mix.

In pre-production we had a couple of days to build a simple pipe rig for the entire 7.5m by 5.7m set. This took a day and on the second day we rigged four cameras. It took a lot longer that we thought and was a very useful test. We came up with better clamps and tie down systems. However, it was still surprisingly slow. Working with a large camera on a dolly and laying track would have been much quicker.

We used Aspera LED dimmable tubes, some Kino tubes and small tungsten lamps combined with practical lamps placed in the set. The practical lamp on the counter corner became a key light for several people in various positions.

My camera crew consisted of Satore who I have worked with on commercials for several years. He is a good friend and an

Diana Glenn as Kylie in 'Lone Wolf' - DOP Geoffrey Simpson ACS

Diana Glenn as Kylie in 'Lone Wolf' - DOP Geoffrey Simpson ACS

excellent first assistant and our second assistant was Sarah Turner, also a good friend from several commercials. They were an excellent team and both incredibly supportive. Lemac were also a big help and very helpful in getting all the bits to make the Blackmagic cameras more user-friendly.

Our data wrangler was a young guy named Jim Cruise who did an outstanding job dealing with the pressure of independent filmmaking and keeping everything on track. Data wrangler rather than digital intermediate technician. I can't thank my camera team enough for keeping this all together.

My gaffer Richard Turton is a friend from several projects over the years. He brought key grip Brian Prebble along plus we had best boy Wilson Huang and third electric was George Husband. A great group.

There were several exterior scenes as well as the day and night interiors in the porn shop, a beach scene, a car interior, a scene on the river in boats, a public bar and several others. It was a very different way to work setting up two or three or four cameras in so many different locations. Locking them off then walking away to video village with no chance of a quick tweak.

One scene had Weaving in bed with his computer which was the Blackmagic mounted on a small hi-hat. He receives a FaceTime call on the computer, gets out of bed picking up the computer Blackmagic camera and walks out onto a balcony where I am waiting to take the camera and position it on a stand for the conversation. At the end, Weaving's hand reaches to close the laptop as I tilt the camera down into blackness.

I think this was a very collaborative process of filmmaking with a lot of people making contributions. Though it all Ogilvie had a strong point-of-view. I happened to be shooting a commercial in Melbourne when he was doing the grade, so spent a few hours with him and our colourist. There was quite a bit of work done on the images to justify different cameras. Images were degraded and desaturated to create some different looks.

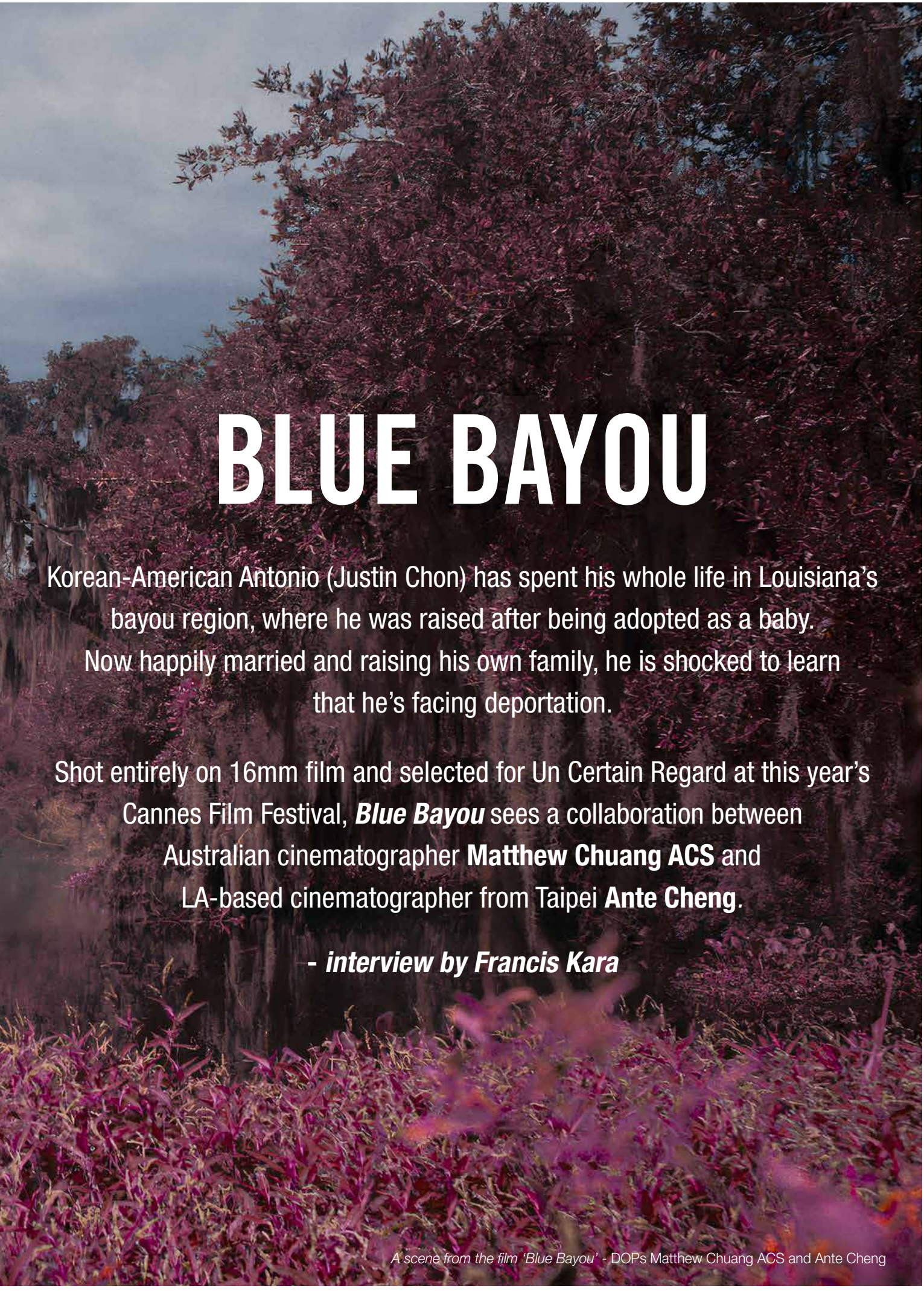
With hindsight, our cameras could be turned on and off by a WiFi remote switch which gave us a lot of heartaches. We also found ourselves on a night shoot and a wet down of Lygon Street in Melbourne. The tram starts getting closer, the actors are in place, we call roll cameras, then we hear the familiar expletives coming from Sartore as he scurries across video village, heading towards the large ladder next to the camera.

Sartore is a big guy and a man on a mission. People are bailing out of his way. He clutches his ARRI WCU4 remote focus in one hand and uses the other hand to pull himself up the top of the ladder to the camera. Ogilvie shouts action just as Sartore reaches the top to hit the switch. The tram enters shot, the actors do their work, we watch it all unfold. Then all crack up laughing.

Making a remote hard-wired on/off switch would have helped us a lot.

Geoffrey Simpson ACS is one of Australia's most highly regarded cinematographers known for his work on *Playing Beattie Bow* (1996), *Shine* (1996), *Oscar and Lucinda* (1997), and *Romulus, My Father* (2007).

***Lone Wolf* received its Australian Premier at this year's Melbourne International Film Festival.**



BLUE BAYOU

Korean-American Antonio (Justin Chon) has spent his whole life in Louisiana's bayou region, where he was raised after being adopted as a baby. Now happily married and raising his own family, he is shocked to learn that he's facing deportation.

Shot entirely on 16mm film and selected for Un Certain Regard at this year's Cannes Film Festival, ***Blue Bayou*** sees a collaboration between Australian cinematographer **Matthew Chuang ACS** and LA-based cinematographer from Taipei **Ante Cheng**.

- interview by Francis Kara

A scene from the film 'Blue Bayou' - DOPs Matthew Chuang ACS and Ante Cheng

Sydney Kowalske and Justin Chon film a scene from 'Blue Bayou' - PHOTO Supplied

Inspired by true events, *Blue Bayou* is a touching, heartbreakingly pertinent film from writer/director Justin Chon, who makes his Cannes Film Festival debut after having his previous features *Gook* (2017) and *Ms. Purple* (2019) premiere at Sundance Film Festival.

A vital tale of identity, statelessness and belonging, *Blue Bayou* is essential viewing from a rising cinematic voice. Chon is arguably best known to Australian audiences as an actor, he played Eric Yorkie in the Twilight series.

Cinematographer Ante Cheng had shot Chon's previous two films. They had been working on *Blue Bayou* together, however production delays and scheduling conflicts arose before Australian cinematographer Matthew Chuang ACS was invited onto the project.

"The script was originally set in New Orleans," says Chuang. ***"At one point, due to a limited budget, the film was moved to Biloxi, Mississippi. During this time of reshaping the film, Academy Award-winner Alicia Vikander*** *(The Danish Girl)* ***came onboard and the film went back to New Orleans and the budget was increased considerably. At that point, Cheng became available again and now being a much bigger production with Justin Chon being the director, writer and playing the lead opposite Vikander, he asked if the both of us would be open to the idea of teaming up on the film."***

Chon already had a strong working relationship with Cheng. ***"During the time I spent with Chon, he felt I contributed new creative ideas that built on top of what he had with Cheng and he wanted to combine the two of us to build a cohesive team,"*** says Chuang.

All three are very inspired by Asian cinema and interestingly some of the team's favourite films had multiple cinematographers involved. The award-winning *Chungking Express* (1994) had two cinematographers; Australian Christopher Doyle HKSC and Andrew Lau. Wong Kar Wai's critically acclaimed *In The Mood For Love* (2000) had three cinematographers; Doyle again with Pun-Leung Kwan and Ping Bin Lee.

"It's common for directors to work in pairs, multiple writers, editors and composers," says Chuang. ***"Given the growing size of the production and our own high expectations of how we envisioned the film, we put our egos aside and decided this was the right step towards making the film we all set out to make."***

The two cinematographers shared an Airbnb and spent their time discussing all aspects of the production. From the theoretical, philosophical and the practicalities of it all. ***"Does it feel right going with this particular stock for that specific scene? How do you feel about using Ektachrome cross-processed for that scene? Is this too stylised if we go this direction, shall we strip it down to keep it honest? We challenged each other and set the bar really high for ourselves,"*** says Chuang.

"It was an ambitious script," explains Chuang. ***"We had fifty-eight locations in only thirty-two days. Sometimes Cheng and I would shoot simultaneously with Chon bouncing between the two different units."***

For example, one unit would set up the process trailer while the other was shooting Chon riding a motorbike with the stunt

Alicia Vikander, Sydney Kowalske and Justin Chon between takes on 'Blue Bayou' - PHOTO Supplied

team. After they completed that set-up the process trailer was ready for Chon to jump on with actress Sydney Kowalske, who plays Jessie in the film, to shoot the motorbike scenes of the two of them together. Each unit would leap ahead with set-ups and locations with Chon bouncing between the two, with the final set-up seeing both units shooting the same action simultaneously.

"This is a story about an American family in the South," says Chuang. ***"We felt it was necessary that this feel immediate and tangible. We wanted a naturalistic visceral vibe to the film. We definitely had strong influences and then it was about honing it down and making it more concentrated so it can be thematic. We had ideas about the colour palette, in terms of production design and wardrobe and how we wanted New Orleans to be shot. It was written for New Orleans so that in itself was a character and a look of the film."***

The filmmakers agreed that 16mm film felt right for *Blue Bayou*. ***"We can talk about all the textual qualities of the grain, the way film renders colour, the latitude in harsh sunlight, all those were a factor but simply it really felt right,"*** he says.

Hirokazu Koreeda's *Nobody Knows* (2004, cinematography by Yutaka Yamazaki) was a big inspiration for the 1.66:1 aspect ratio, which is native to 16mm. ***"We wanted to embrace all the qualities of 16mm, the energy of that format, our choice to frame in 1:66:1. 16mm had the photochemical look that captured what we felt New Orleans was like for us and for the story."***

Chuang and Cheng shot all of the costume and make-up tests on location when production design had already spent time dressing the space, with the wallpaper already installed. They went through the different film stocks learning all of the subtle differences.

"Each character had a different colour palette for wardrobe," says Chuang. ***"Antonio*** (played by Chon) ***had a lot of earth tones, blues for Kathy*** (Vikander) ***and Parker*** (Linh Dan Pham) ***was purple. Jessie*** (Kowalske) ***was more lively with yellows while the cops were darker and more stern colours. In terms of setting, we took full advantage of film and made sure that things were saturated. We also took full advantage of natural light, dusk and dawn."***

The film was shot-listed in advance with very specific movements for certain moments but Chuang and Cheng always kept searching and open to spontaneous ideas evolving once on set and presented with all the elements.

Blue Bayou was filmed on Kodak VISION3 200T Colour Negative Film 7213 for daytime exteriors, VISION3 250D Colour Negative Film 7207 when it came to sunrise and sunset and VISION3 500T Colour Negative Film 7219 for daytime and nighttime interiors, and we also shot some Ektachrome Colour Reversal 7294, cross-processed, for one particular scene. The Arriflex 416 and ARRI SR2 cameras were paired with Zeiss Super Speeds S16, Canon 8-64mm T2.4, and Canon 11-165mm T2.5.

"A crucial tool was the zoom lens," says Chuang. ***"There were some key moments with Antonio's character that we felt that a slow push-in zoom, sometimes combined with a slow***

Actor and director Justin Chon (centre) on location - PHOTO Supplied

dolly-in really took us into his internal state of mind. Zooms get frowned upon generally in drama but it's such a staple of that 16mm aesthetic and auteur vibe that we were pushing for." Chuang stayed away from Steadicam and gimbals because it felt 'too polished' for what they were going for.

Lighting consisted of ARRI SkyPanels, ARRI HMIs, Astera Titans, LiteMats, CRLS Reflectors, and DMG Lumiere Mini Mix. The cinematographers tried to keep lighting coming from windows or from anywhere it felt naturalistic. They also didn't want the light to be too sterile or designed. ***"New Orleans has an edge and we wanted to capture that,"*** says Chuang.

The camera crew consisted of first assistant camera Samuel Kim, second assistant camera Melanie Gates, additional second assistant camera Danika Andrade and film loader Bily Salazar. ***"Kim worked with Chon and Cheng on their previous two films so it was important to have that experience be a part of our camera team,"*** says Chuang. ***"We were lucky to have Gates and Salazar onboard since they're the last remaining crew in New Orleans with considerable experience working with film."***

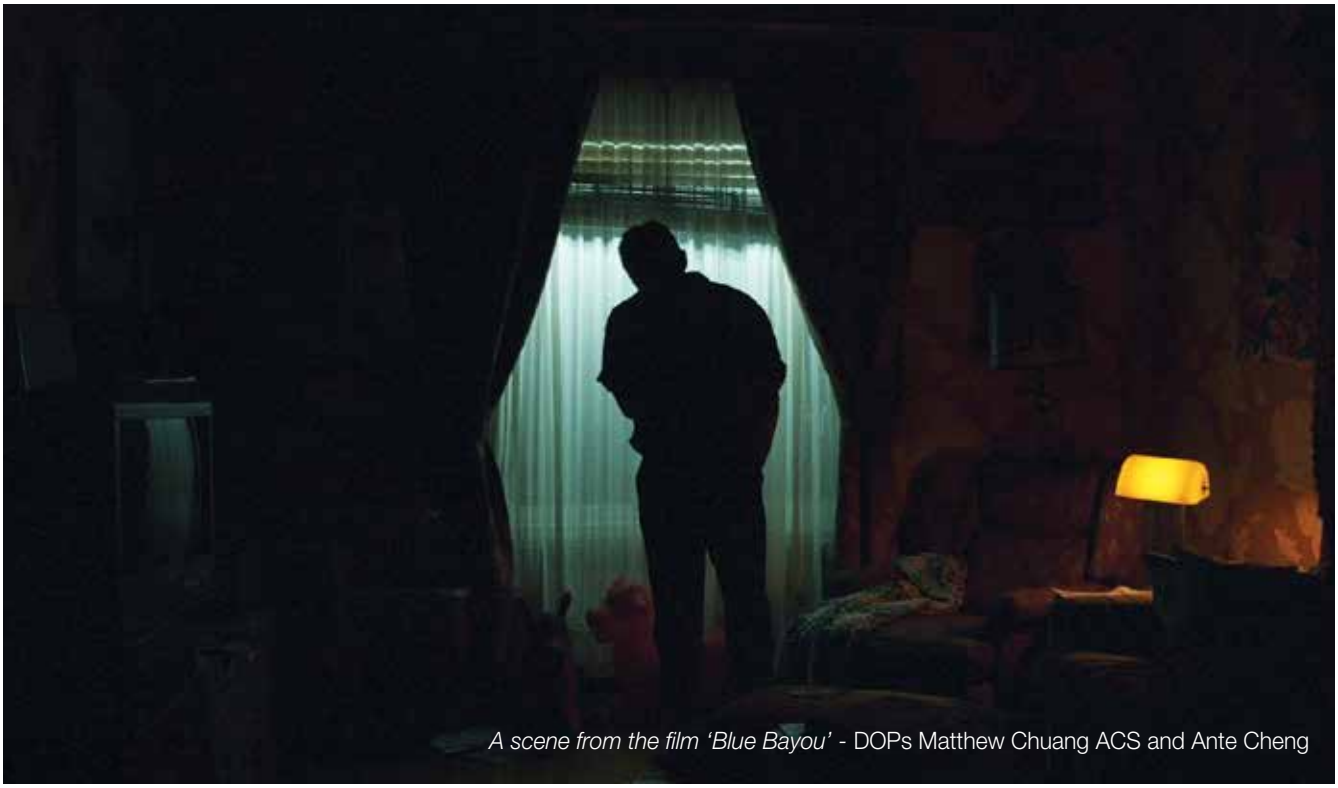
Brad Martin was gaffer and Justin Crawford was key grip. ***"They embraced our approach to the film and were invaluable in helping us accomplish our more ambitious setups such as the Bayou scenes at night, and coordinating the simultaneous units working together,"*** says Chuang. ***"We owe a lot to the New Orleans crew and it was a pleasure to work alongside them all. It was important to them since the film is set in New Orleans that we capture it with a sense of authenticity and honesty."***

In terms of approaching things like coverage of more 'performance driven' scenes, for Chuang and Cheng, it really was dependent on the scene itself and how they wanted it to feel. ***"If the scene had multiple view points and presented a lot of informational elements such as our scenes in the lawyers office, it would start more traditional but each time we revisited the lawyer we changed it up dependent on how the scene shifts between the characters view points,"*** says Chuang.

An argument scene between Antonio and Cathy in the house was always planned as a 'oner', to be captured in a single shot with no edits. ***"We knew this going into it so emphasis was placed on location scouting and trying to find a location with a layout that could work with what we were hoping to achieve with the choreography between the actors, the camera and the space."***

"Even for the motorbike riding scenes it was always driven by the emotional state of Antonio," explains Chuang. ***"This is also evident in the heist scene, where Chon wanted it to feel more distinctive than the rest of the film. More adrenaline fuelled, as Chon would describe it as if Antonio was a ex-drug addict and this was him relapsing after being sober for a long time. It needed to feel heightened in that way with Antonio's emotional 'hit' resulting in the scene being captured on Ektachrome, cross-processed and step-printed."***

The filmmakers are grateful that Tom Poole at Company 3 came on board as the film's colourist. ***"He saw a cut of the film, loved it, and knew exactly what we were going for stylistically and where we wanted the audience to be emotionally,"*** says Chuang. ***"We had a lot of blues in the film and blues tend to wash things out completely, but even within the blues Poole was able to bring out some life with skin tones. He knew more about enhancing the***



A scene from the film 'Blue Bayou' - DOPs Matthew Chuang ACS and Ante Cheng

photochemical qualities of film than we did and he really brought everything to life."

Chuang says he feels proud that they set out to create a film that really captures a true sense of place visually. ***"New Orleans itself is such a character,"*** he says. ***"The humidity, the thickness of the air, the vibrancy and distinctive colours. There is an edge to New Orleans we felt like we captured."***

One decision that was made in post-production, with full support of the films distributor Focus Features, was to keep the 'hairs in the gate' in the finished film. ***"When we were filming we tried everything one can do to prevent it, from meticulously cleaning the gate after every take, continually servicing the camera at Panavision to in depth conversations with the lab,"*** says Chuang. ***"In the end it really came down to how the film responded to the humidity of New Orleans. To me it perfectly captures what this film is about, an imperfect world."***

16mm gives *Blue Bayou* another level of emotionality. Shooting on film takes a lot of discipline. The cinematographers wanted to challenge themselves and to grow as filmmakers. ***"Chen and I are glad that we managed to shoot a film on film and hopefully it is not the last,"*** says Chuang.

Matthew Chuang ACS is an award-winning Australian cinematographer.

Francis Kara is a contributor to Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

A scene from the film 'Blue Bayou' - DOPs Matthew Chuang ACS and Ante Cheng

GODZILLA VS. KONG

Two of the greatest icons in motion picture history,
the fearsome Godzilla and the mighty King Kong,
battle it out with mankind caught in the balance.

New Zealand cinematographer **Ben Seresin BSC ASC**
(*Pain & Gain, World War Z*) frames and grounds humanity into
Adam Wingard's epic monster movie ***Godzilla vs. Kong***.

- interview by Darcy Yuille

A scene from 'Godzilla vs. Kong' – DOP Ben Seresin BSC ASC

Maia (Eiza González), Nathan (Alexander Skarsgard), Ilene (Rebecca Hall) and Jia (Kaylee Hottle) in 'Godzilla vs. Kong' - DOP Ben Seresin BSC ASC

Some films you think about long after you leave the cinema. Others give you a hit of adrenaline and leave you exhilarated and satisfied from the ride. *Godzilla vs. Kong* knows it falls squarely in the second camp. One of the first, large scale (pun intended) cinema releases post worldwide Covid-19 lockdowns, *Godzilla vs. Kong* has almost single-handedly been credited with bringing audiences back to the cinema experience.

AC **How do you end up working on a film this?**

BS I shoot a lot of large-scale television commercials. I was on a massive six-week shoot for Emirates Airline - those were the days - and I got a call from Eric McLeod, the line producer on *Godzilla vs. Kong*. We had worked before on a few projects. Luckily enough I was in Los Angeles for a few days and squeezed in a meeting with the film's director, Adam Wingard (*V/H/S, The Guest*). He had started making smaller independent movies like me and that background was really appealing to me. We developed a great connection.

We already had a common language and within a few hours they called me back and asked me to come on board. On these massive productions, having a personal connection with key people is really important. Having a familiar face, and a director who has shot and edited films before, was used to not having a lot of resources and being innovative with his projects made the process a lot easier.

AC **This is a big-budget monster movie. How do you even begin to get your head around a project like this?**

BS Studios have these things budgeted to a large extent before the project is even crewed. When you're working with large numbers - and I think the budget of this movie was around $180 million - they tend to allocate a number to the visual effects' budget and start with what they can achieve in the computer-generated area, to ascertain how 'big' they can go. Then the challenge is to see where physical production can marry alongside this scale.

Often the danger is, because of the cost of building things in the computer relative to an actual crew of 300-400, computer-generated imagery (CGI) is often seen as easier or more

Jia (Kaylee Hottle) with Kong in a touching scene from 'Godzilla vs. Kong' - DOP Ben Seresin BSC ASC

King Kong in 'Godzilla vs. Kong' - DOP Ben Seresin BSC ASC

manageable. You end up with films that are predominantly built in the virtual world; the human element becomes an afterthought. The challenge with a film like *Godzilla vs. Kong* where the two main characters are these huge CGI creations, is how do we get real set pieces with actors to integrate into the computer-generated world.

AC **What makes a project like this work?**

BS The projects like this that succeed are the ones that get this interaction between the two worlds right. That's where the process becomes complex because then you have to have a high-degree of planning and you really have to have worlds where the CGI and human characters can interact and convey the scale. We've all seen the films where characters are put in small spaces, then they look out a window and they see the large CGI world.

For a film like this to work, you need to plan in detail for every scene and setting so that you are reaffirming the scale of the world and the characters consistently, and that each interaction is a different version of that scale. The first thing I generally do is start grappling with this scale, talking to the director and the production design team about that integration, what is real and what will be done in the computer.

AC **This wasn't your first large-scale, CGI-heavy production. How does a project like *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* (2009) prepare you for a project like this?**

BS It does help a lot because you know how things can work. It's a daunting process, you're creating characters and imagery that are one-hundred feet tall, and it's not as simple to pre-visualise every sequence before going out and shoot it. You need the ability to ground the shoot on the basis of real filmmaking, almost like you have a camera with you and you are filming stuff for real.

My approach is to imagine I have a little hand-held camera; no crew, no lights, so what would I do? Where will I put the camera to capture the action in the most interesting way. Not to limit myself to that but use it as a true starting point. The *Transformers* experience was very much from that point-of-view, because we had a tonne of physical effects and special

King Kong and Godzilla in a scene from 'Godzilla vs. Kong' - DOP Ben Seresin BSC ASC

An epic balle sequence in 'Godzilla vs. Kong' - IMAGE Courtesy Warner Bros. and Ledgendary Pictures

effects that really helped integrate that world and marry it to the human element. I learned a lot in that production.

AC **The film shifts multiple environments; on ships at sea, in the jungle, snow and finally in Hong Kong itself. What was your technique for maintaining scale?**

BS The first thing you have to realise is you can cheat stuff a lot, and you kind of have to. The creatures aren't the same size as each other, and they are battling. They have to feel like they have an even chance of winning. In a sense, Godzilla has a huge advantage in any way so we ended up arming Kong with a massive axe.

A lot of this is dealt with by the visual effects department department. Once you start building a shot, you realise one of the characters could overwhelm the other, so with the lensing you end up cheating. They are characters that move incredibly slowly to the human eye, so that also needs to be cheated to create momentum and keep up the kinetic energy.

AC **With what equipment did you film?**

BS If I had my way I'd shoot everything on IMAX! We filmed *Godzilla vs. Kong* on an ARRI Alexa 65, a larger-than-large-format 65mm digital cinema camera, along with DNA lenses. I had used this package recently on a Doug Liman film called *Chaos Walking* (2021). I love the format, for IMAX's 'poor cousin' it's amazing. There are lots of lenses available now and the sensor's beautiful. We also had an Alexa Mini with lenses that recreated the DNA's feel, a lot of vintage glass.

The Alexa 65 and those lenses really lent themselves to a large-scale film like this. To me, the large-format sensor is just a beautiful way to create imagery. I just love it and the way it emulates the human perspective is a big deal. The way the imagery is communicated on a big screen is hugely important and when you are dealing with a story of this size it really does lend itself to the 'cinema experience'.

I fell in love with the large format on *Transformers*, and it would be a pretty particular picture I would not consider using it for. It's pretty close to becoming an industry standard for this kind of film, and we shot some tests and showed them to Wingard, some comparison tests, and once you see those it's difficult not to come on board.

AC **Where did you shoot?**

BS We did a bit of pre-production in Los Angeles and then some filming in Hawaii, but did most of the location work in Hong Kong before moving to the Gold Coast for studio shoots.

It was interesting because while we were shooting in Hong Kong, the production team was setting up in the studios on the Gold Coast. It was one of those arrangements that made sense on paper to make those decisions, but with time we found that, even with Zoom and the amazing communication tools we have, there is no substitute for being in the same room as key creatives, or standing in the space. Ultimately it worked, sometimes it was a little frustrating, but we worked through it. I think many people have found adapting to remote work is really challenging, especially now.

AC **Was your camera department local?**

BS I had my U.S. crew mostly, the camera crew travelled with me throughout the job, and then I had an Australian crew in Queensland. I had worked with all my Australian crew before and I would have them on the whole job if I could.

Godzilla in a scene from 'Godzilla vs. Kong' - DOP Ben Seresin BSC ASC

AC I noticed in your bio that you worked on the classic Australian film *Coolangatta Gold* (1984) as a focus puller?

BS That's going back a few years! It's funny though, we were shooting on a Gold Coast beach for *Godzilla vs. Kong* and it was the same one from Coolangatta Gold all those years ago.

AC Was there a specific look you needed to adhere to from the preceding films in the series such as *Kong: Skull Island* (2017) or *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* (2019)?

BS No, not really. What's good about these films is that the studios are somewhat supportive about letting each of these films go in its own direction. Wingard and I were both influenced by *Godzilla* (2014), and we wanted to ground the audience in experiencing these monsters in the human perspective as much as possible. Being actively engaged in fight sequences was important; it was paramount we had a sense of being anchored with the humans.

AC Were you involved in the grade?

BS A lot, I did it all. We went through Company 3 in Los Angeles and Stefan Sonnenfeld (*Wonder Woman, A Star Is Born*). I spent seven weeks doing the Digital Intermediate (DI), which is unprecedented for me, I've never spent that long on a film. It was really a consequence of what happens more and more on these films is the huge editorial changes that obviously affect and impact the visual effects and CGI teams' work in a huge way.

Productions can sometimes bring changes to a film's visual effects right up to the last minute, and the consequences of this is sometimes the look of a sequence isn't quite as polished as it could be. The DI ends up being the last port of call for being able to smooth over any bumps. That said, I do think the huge amount of work you can do in a DI to help integrate the photography with the CGI is often undervalued.

AC Are there any shots or sequences that stood out for you?

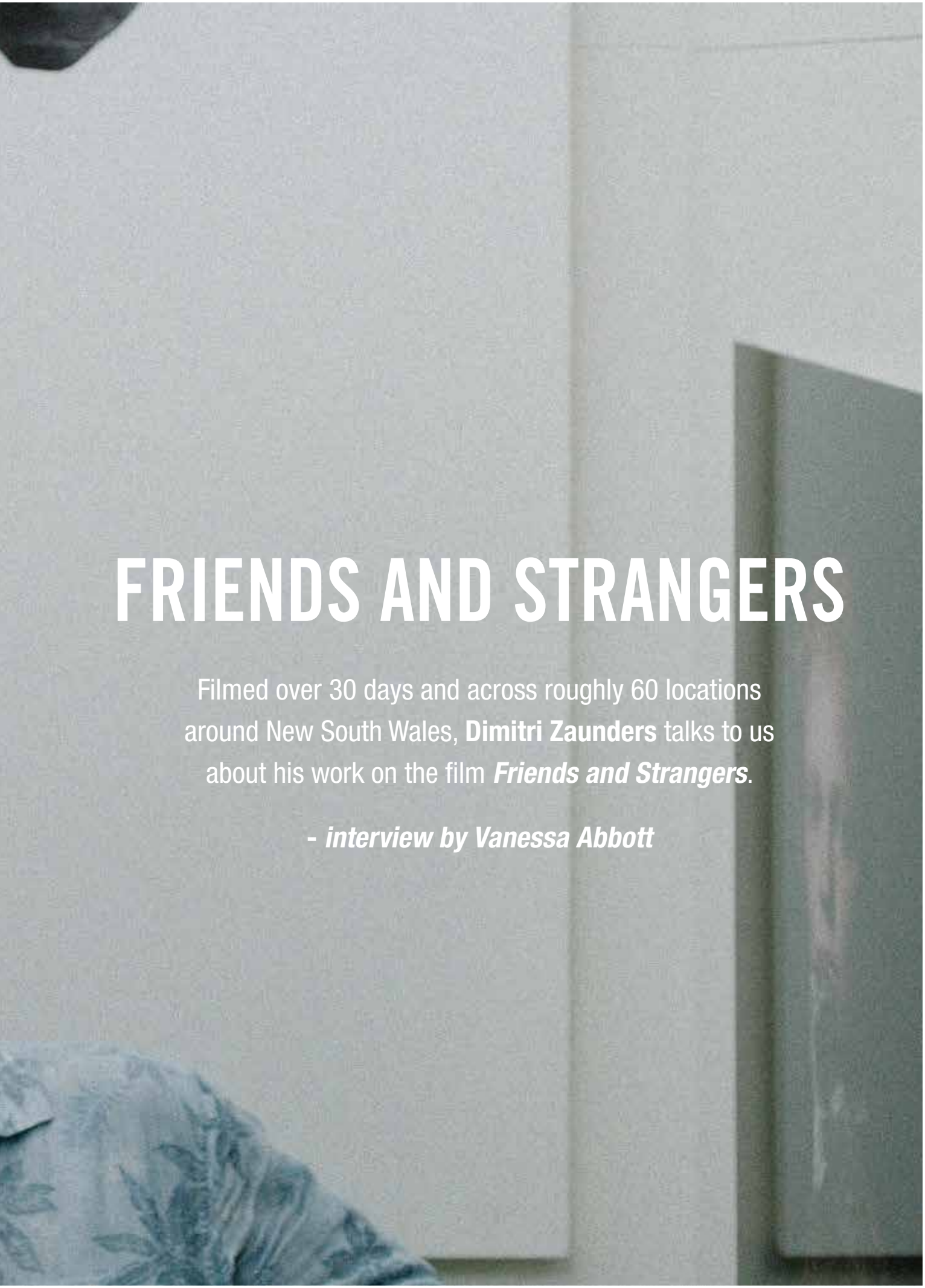
BS Unfortunately my favourite sequence didn't even make the edit! It's a great opening sequence with components of the Mechagodzilla character. Dramatically it just didn't quite find a place in the movie. But in terms of a sequence that I'm really fond of, I really love the opening with Jia (Kaylee Hottle), the little girl, who was connecting with Kong for the first time at the beginning of the film. It really speaks to the marriage of the human element and the monsters. I felt pleased that we got the connection between them, she's holding up the doll to share with him. It's a very simple sequence but to me it's the most interesting part of making these films, building a scene that gets the two worlds together.

At the end of the day it's actually a really simple film. It was important not to show off with the camera. There is so much going on in the frame, you really want the audience to feel part of the action. For my money, it's more important to have a sense of grounding and if we achieved that I'd be really pleased.

Ben Seresin BSC ASC is a New Zealand cinematographer best known for his work on *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* (2009), *Unstoppable* (2010) and *World War Z* (2014).

Darcy Yuille is experienced in all facets of film production, from loading to directing and everything in between. He runs a production company in Melbourne.

A scene from the film 'Friends and Strangers' - DOP Dimitri Zaunders



FRIENDS AND STRANGERS

Filmed over 30 days and across roughly 60 locations around New South Wales, **Dimitri Zaunders** talks to us about his work on the film ***Friends and Strangers***.

- interview by Vanessa Abbott

A scene from the film 'Friends and Strangers' - DOP Dimitri Zaunders

AC **How did you first get involved on this project?**

DZ I knew director James Vaughan's work, we had known each other briefly before he moved to Melbourne to work with the filmmaker Amiel Courtin-Wilson, whose work I loved and who gave his support to the film. Along with the great producer Lucy Rennick it was great to be a part of that team and to be able to read the script for *Friends and Strangers*. I hadn't read anything like it before. It was a wild and ambitious film about Australia in three very different parts - a failed romantic getaway at an outback campsite, an absurd comedy in a harbourside mansion and a surreal odyssey through the Australian bush.

AC **Describe the original pitch for us?**

DZ The pitch document was full of wonderful images, particularly from street photographers that I love very much, so it was already a great basis. But of course that was just a starting point and we added to that over the course of a long time sharing other images that we were both drawn to.

We had the opportunity before embarking on the film together, even before any real preproduction, to shoot a series of art films and short documentaries, which we did over many months leading up to starting on the film. It was a beautiful collaboration. By the time we started our first day of shooting I think we didn't even need to say a word to each other to know what we wanted to do.

AC **Did you have any references for what you wanted to achieve?**

DZ It was fortunate that we had the time to screen many films together and talk about the things that we like. We watched Chantal Akerman's *From The East* (1993, cinematography by Bernard Delville and Rémon Fromont SBC), set in post-Soviet Eastern Europe where the camera tracks slowly through city streets and we were both inspired by those compositions and arrangements of people spatially.

And we were both inspired a lot by the films of Hong Sang Soo, Albert Serra and the sprawling ensembles of Robert Altman. I looked a lot at the work of Australian painter Arthur Boyd, looking at how his landscapes responded and reacted subjectively to the country. I wanted to use that idea of showing the land and topography of a place, not what's beyond the horizon, compositionally almost to avoid seeing horizons but to be looking down, and inwards I was greatly inspired by street photographers who take a documentary approach to exploring the absurdity of society, especially Robert Frank in his landmark photo series *The Americans*, and Martin Parr who rendered those invisble tensions and inanities in British society into visual form.

AC **What was your collaboration like with the production design team on this film?**

DZ *Friends and Strangers* is hugely ambitious in scale and there was a lot to do. We started with about 130 pages of script and we needed to find something like 40 different locations; city streets, a campground on a lake, the tops of waterfalls, harbour beaches, bushtracks and cliff precipices. We were fortunate to have the great Milena Stojanovska as our production designer, who has a background in the visual arts and outside film works with contemporary painters. It was a great collaboration, talking about the sets, choosing different curtains to filter the light and discussing what colours we'd paint the walls. Vaughan, Stojanovska and I travelled all over New South Wales looking at possible locations and talking

A scene from the film 'Friends and Strangers' - DOP Dimitri Zaunders

about what we wanted to do with the film.

Because so much of the film took place outside, it meant that we were often working in large exterior scenes where we were modulating the light through large bounce and negative sources, and scheduling things quite precisely. That meant a huge amount of collaboration with our incredible first assistant director Stuart Beedie to plan the times of day for each scene. There was a very particular quality of light that I wanted for the film, a hard light normally in three quarter back light, and to always feel the warm sun.

We were incredibly lucky, I think there was only one day when there were a few clouds in the sky, although later we shot some pickups during the worst of Sydney's bushfire smoke and there were a few weeks when we couldn't shoot because we couldn't see the sun. In some cases that softness in exteriors would be a huge gift, although it sadly didn't fit what we were trying to match to and had already established.

AC **What factors did you take into consideration when choosing cameras and lenses?**

DZ I was interested in exploring a different tonal range for the film. I've always loved exploring that kind of densitometry with film, experimenting with exposures and putting the film into the toe of the exposure curve. During pre-production we shot some images of the bush at 1600 ASA to test what that image would look like tonally and in terms of grain, and it had an incredible texture and character that drew us in.

In pre-production, the director and I found that we loved films that sustain themselves in unbroken scenes and landscapes, and I think quality of the light and the texture of the image becomes even more intrinsically important, putting life into the image. In the end we didn't go with 16mm but instead the Alexa with Cooke Speed Panchros - they had a character and unpredictability to their out of focus areas that was appealing.

It was incredible to have the support of Lemac on the film, providing gear that was shipped from other parts of Australia and always ensuring we had what we needed. We tested a lot of filters and thanks to Lemac chose Classic Softs in various strengths. Sharpness and clarity were something I wanted to pull out of the film, to pair that harder light and depth in the image with an image that was slightly distant and encouraged the viewer to work harder to peer in.

AC **How did you approach coverage?**

DZ In our approach to the film's scenes we wanted to create a sense of imbalance within each scenario, for that to feel incomplete and to embrace the off screen space. To have an awareness of perspective, whose point-of-view we're seeing and whose we're not, and the restraint of leaving the camera there. Often people would block each other, they might drift out of the frame, and action would take place off-screen. That was something we responded to a lot in the films to feel that the country extended beyond the edges of the frame, to have an awareness of the borders or limits of the picture and to always feel that this was a limited perspective that was frustrated or impeded in some way.

I think i'd describe it almost as an incidental kind of filmmaking. We spoke a lot about wanting the film to feel like events and characters were almost captured accidentally, as though things were taking place in the foreground while what was happening in the mid-ground and far background were almost equally weighted. I think from experience the irony

A scene from the film 'Friends and Strangers' - DOP Dimitri Zaunders

is that it always takes an incredible amount of planning and preparation to make things feel unplanned or accidental!.

I think there's a great balance to be found between doing that work in preproduction and preparing a lot, and then embracing the unforeseen accidents that occur. It was interesting to work in that way.

AC Can you speak about your own crew in the camera department? Did you operate the camera yourself?

DZ We were so fortunate to have about 30 actual shoot days with the full crew, besides the extra days that we had by ourselves. It was important to me to have a diverse and experienced camera and lighting crew, and we were honoured to have the experienced people we had; Matt Scott Chow, Tim Fay, Michael Fairbairn and Rose Newland were my great focus pullers, Trudi Gultom our wonderful loader, Rollie Serrano, Jamie Gray and Blake Sharp Wiggins in lighting and Georgia Plantzos supported us as data wrangler. My gaffer was Charles Gray, who i've worked with over many years and was an invaluable asset to the film.

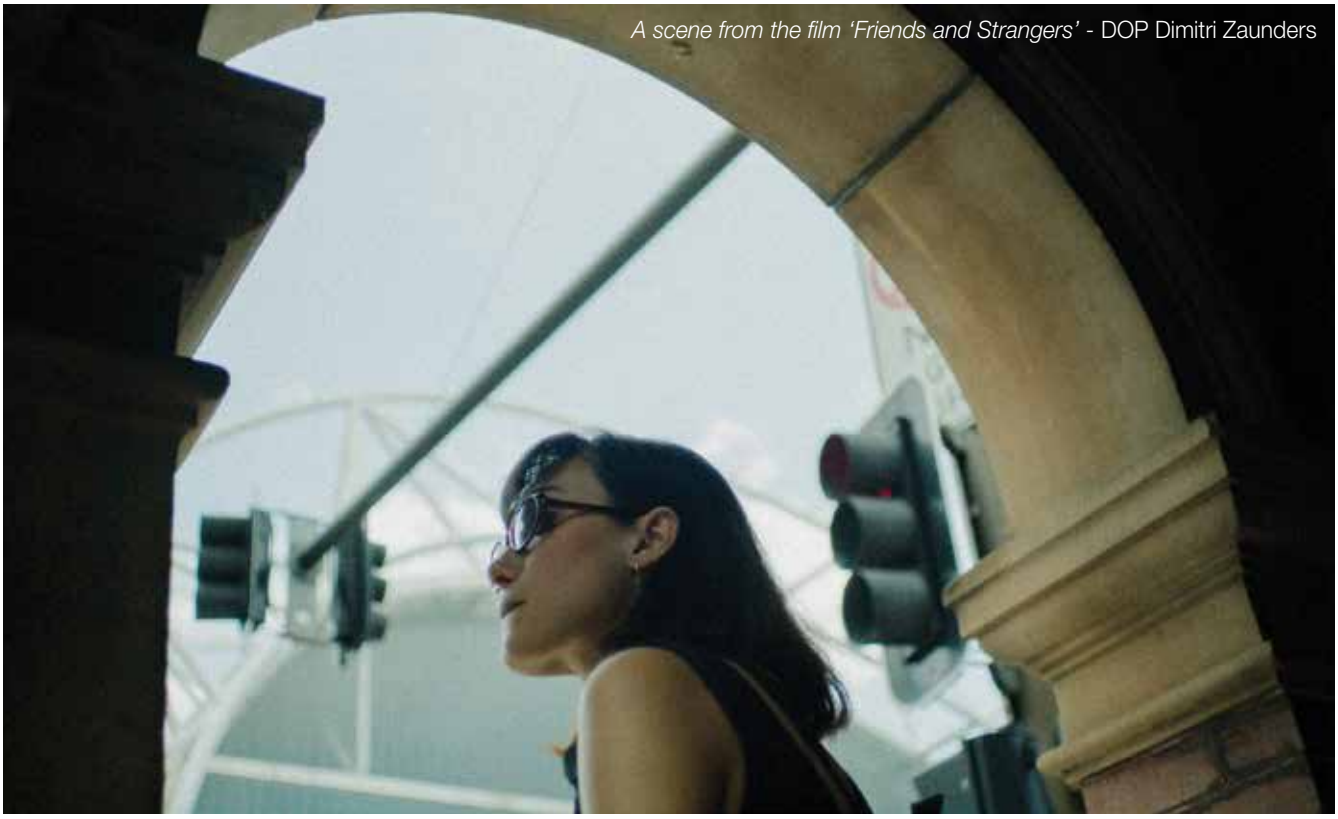
It was an incredible core crew who would travel with us for various phases of filming - on a lake at Burrinjuck Dam, near Yass, we all stayed in cabins, and in Fitzroy Falls just out of Kangaroo Valley we all stayed in rooms on a large property and ate together every night in a big mess hall - there was a great camaraderie, it felt a bit like we were all away together on a summer camp.

AC Were you involved with the post-production, and what was your intention going into the grade? Who was your colourist?

DZ We'd put a lot of consideration into the colour and textures of the film, I was always looking at tests and even during shooting we'd be looking at the dailies, so that the director and I are always reviewing and thinking about the direction we're going. We don't have that much choice these days over different film stocks and colour processes, and I think it's good to be making those decisions as part of the making of the film. Tonally I didn't want the film to have too much shadow detail, especially in large exteriors, but it had to have beautiful highlights. We were so fortunate to be able to work with the colourist Yanni Kronenberg, who's been a long term collaborator for both of us. He gave so much of himself to the film.

AC Do you have a favourite shot or scene in *Friends and Strangers*? Why?

DZ We had scenes involving large set pieces, like a car breaking down in the middle of Oxford Street, a man suspended from a towering tree after his parachute becomes ensnared in the upper branches, and underwater scenes of swimming in the middle of Sydney harbour. It was fun orchestrating long, complicated shots with huge amounts of extras, such as in the driving scenes. But most of all I loved the images we were able to capture unexpectedly, often it would be something happening off in a different part of the street away from where we'd be filming, or something that would wander unprompted through frame. We were very lucky that we'd often be able to return to locations at different times with just the camera or a smaller crew. For me the beauty of the film is in the moments that couldn't have been replicated, the odd arrangements and blocking of people in landscapes and their unusual activities on the edges of the frame that occupy an ambiguous position between documentary and fiction.



A scene from the film 'Friends and Strangers' - DOP Dimitri Zaunders

AC **With the benefit of hindsight, what might you go back and do differently or what would you change?**

DZ I knew going in that a feature film can take over your whole life, especially once my wife Rebecca Lamond became involved in the film before shooting, first as a line producer and eventually as a producer. I think in hindsight I'd try to keep some sanity in our personal life by giving ourselves some space away from the film!

I couldn't be happier with the film, even if it did take over my life for a while. It was the first Australian film ever selected for Rotterdam's Tiger Competition, received a selection for MoMa's 'New Directors/New Films' at Film at Lincoln Centre in New York, and won the special jury prize at the incredible Jeonju International Film Festival in Korea. It was amazing to receive that prize from Albert Serra, who had been a huge inspiration on the film all the way back at the beginning. To see the response to the film overseas has been incredible. It will have its premiere in Australia at some great festivals very soon!

Dimitri Zaunders is an up-and-coming cinematographer and photographer, working between documentary and ficition.

Vanessa Abbott is a writer based in Melboiurne.

A scene from the film 'Friends and Strangers' - DOP Dimitri Zaunders

BENEDICTION

The story of English poet, writer and soldier Siegfried Sassoon is explored in ***Benediction,*** an upcoming WWI drama written and directed by Terence Davies and filmed by **Nicola Daley ACS**.

- interview by Sarah Jo Fraser

A scene from Terrence Davies' 'Benediction' - DOP Nicola Daley ACS

A scene from Terrence Davies' 'Benediction' - DOP Nicola Daley ACS

Benediction tells the real-life story of Siegfried Sassoon, played by Jack Lowden and Peter Capaldi at different stages of his life, a British poet and soldier, as he searches for meaning and hope throughout his life through poetry, religion and other means. The film spans his life from 1915 to the 1950s and charts his experiences from the First World War and beyond.

Sassoon was a complex man who survived the horrors of fighting in the First World War and was decorated for his bravery but who became a vocal critic of the government's continuation of the war when he returned from service. His poetry was inspired by his experiences on the Western Front and he became one of the leading war poets of the era.

"***What's interesting is that we didn't film any battle scenes,***" explains cinematographer Nicola Daley ACS. "***All the war footage is archival; it's all old black and white footage.***" Director Terence Davies is no stranger to using archive footage amongst a drama narrative, having done this in a handful of previous films.

Adored by members of the aristocracy as well as stars of London's literary and stage world, Sassoon embarked on affairs with several men as he attempted to come to terms with his homosexuality. At the same time, broken by the horror of war, he made his life's journey a quest for salvation, trying to find it within the conformity of marriage and religion. His story is one of a troubled man in a fractured world searching for peace and self-acceptance, something which speaks as meaningfully to the modern world as it did then.

"***What Sassoon saw and how he experienced the war was embedded in who he was as a person, so the archive footage plays throughout the film as memories, or sort of resonances of what he experienced. It's quite an interesting mix of mediums.***"

Daley was excited to work with Davies, a stalwart of British cinema. He is best known as the writer and director of *Distant Voices, Still Lives* (1988) which earned the FIPRESCI Prize at that year's Cannes Film Festival, as well as *The Long Day Closes* (1992) and *The House of Mirth* (2000). But his years of experience didn't mean he wasn't open to new ideas. "***I think of him as a traditional, classic poetic director,***" says Daley. "***But then he's got all of these ideas for visual effects, so we've got a couple of really interesting special effects moments in the film.***"

In one scene a young Sassoon (Lowden) sits in a huge cathedral. "***Davies wanted to start the camera behind him and track 180-degrees around the actor, then as we track around he 'morphs' into the older Sassoon*** (Capaldi)," says Daley. "***Then, when we come to the front we reveal that Siegfried's son is sitting behind him.***"

Working closely with visual effects supervisor Paul Docherty, the cinematographer used motion control to achieve this. "***We planned it a lot,***" she says. "***We had to pick the exact seat he was sitting in and then the motion control team went in hours before we arrived to set it all up. There was a great deal of discussion about what they were wearing, because everything has to morph right so you don't want one person to be wearing something wild.***"

Lighting a space as large as the enormous Downside Abbey was another challenge in itself. "***We went through several lighting designs on paper,***" says Daley. "***I remember there was a gully on the outside of the building, so to light through the windows we would have had to spend a week building scaffolding which just wasn't in the budget. In the end I lit inside the cathedral and through the two ends of the church with 18Ks, but then there were a lot of Sky Panels bounced, 6Ks lighting columns, just to give everything a shape. It was all really soft and natural.***"

"***The basis of cinematography is to tell the story and evoke the emotions of the characters, so I try reflect that in the lighting, but it's more obvious in some places than others,***" the cinematographer explains. "***What is beautiful about this film is that it's not just a biopic about someone's life, it goes into his interior world too. Davies has a very specific way of seeing things and part of my job is to uncover how to practically do something that's very poetic.***"

Benediction marks the first of Davies' films to feature Steadicam, a fact which Daley recounts with a sense of pride. "***He was a bit hesitant about using it so I sent him a couple of showreels from Steadicam operators that I use and he***

A scene from Terrence Davies' 'Benediction' - DOP Nicola Daley ACS

watched them. He thought they were brilliant, he was really pleased with it. In fact I think he really embraced it."

"We had Steadicam operator Dan Edwards and he sort of free-flowed with it a bit. He used it in a poetic way and I think maybe that was something new for Davies who realised that it could be quite intuitive. It was really fun to watch him enjoy the experience of going, 'oh, this is a new tool," says Daley.

A later scene in the film depicting the time when Sassoon and his wife have a baby used Steadicam as a fluid way of bringing the audience into a space Daley describes as the 'mirror world', another of Davies' visual effects moments in the film.

"They're at the christening and he's dancing with his wife, and the camera comes off a shot of them and moves into the mirror. Then we're in the 'mirror world', and into Sassoon's memories of all the partners that he's had. He's dancing with them one-by-one and the camera tracks towards them and past them. It's like an endless track past and then the next character appears, until the last couple is him, older, dancing with his older wife played by Gemma Jones."

"We decided that we would use Steadicam at the christening going into the mirror, and then once you're in the 'mirror world' it's green screen and a track," says Daley. ***"It sounds really simple, it's just a straight track towards the couple dancing, going past them, and repeating that for each couple."*** Crew had music standing by for playback and a choreographer watching that the steps were in time. ***"The grip got very good at going at the same speed."***

With each couple, Daley made the lighting slightly colder, starting with half colour-temperature orange (CTO), going to a quarter, and landing on around a half colour-temperature blue (CTB), which speaks to the cinematographer's philosophy on evoking emotion through the camera. ***"It's about remembering all of the people he was in love with, and it ends on him aged and in an unhappy marriage, so it's quite sad,"*** says Daley.

"Colour is one of my storytelling loves," explains Daley. In her early discussions with the director, painters such as CW Nevinson and John Singer Sargent were used as a launchpad for discussions on the look and feel of the film, and this informed many of her choices down the line, using mixed light to cultivate a painterly feel to the whole film. ***"I'd often use two lamps behind a sail, one with half CTB and one with half CTO so one would cancel out the other, but then the shadows were coloured. The colour of the shadow is so important to what you're lighting."***

Benediction follows a non-linear narrative, with the audience relying on whoever is playing the lead character to get a sense of where they are in the timeline. ***"The film never tells you what year it is, so there's very poetic movement between different time periods,"*** says Daley. Filtration was used to inform the audience of Sassoon's internal world, ***"the only filters we used were Glimmerglass diffusion, but they were a storytelling tool as well. The diffusion was used In Sassoon's more halcyon days, and then when he's, say, under pressure or depressed, there's no diffusion."***

Cooke Speed Panchros were chosen to lens the film after Daley had used them on a previous film *Pin Cushion* in 2017, favouring them for their smooth and creamy old-style period look. The 32mm and the 40mm lenses were the workhorses of the film. *Benediction* was shot on the Sony Venice. ***"It's not a close-up film, it takes in the environment and the sets, which were gorgeous,"*** she says. ***"We shot on location, however production designer Andy Harries completely transformed each one. Every time we walked in we were amazed."***

"It was a great team, starting with first assistant camera Jessie Brough," says Daley. ***"My gaffer was Pete Trevina, and my grip was Chris Hughes who was really instrumental in working out some of those trickier shots. It was a really balanced team and I think it's important to create that balance because you want to facilitate an environment for the actors to do the best job they can."***

Nicola Daley ACS is an award-winning Australian cinematographer based in the United Kingdom, known for her work on the film *Pin Cushion* (2017).

Sarah Jo Fraser was the recipient of Screen Australia's 2018 'Gender Matters' cinematography placement program and is based in Melbourne, Australia.

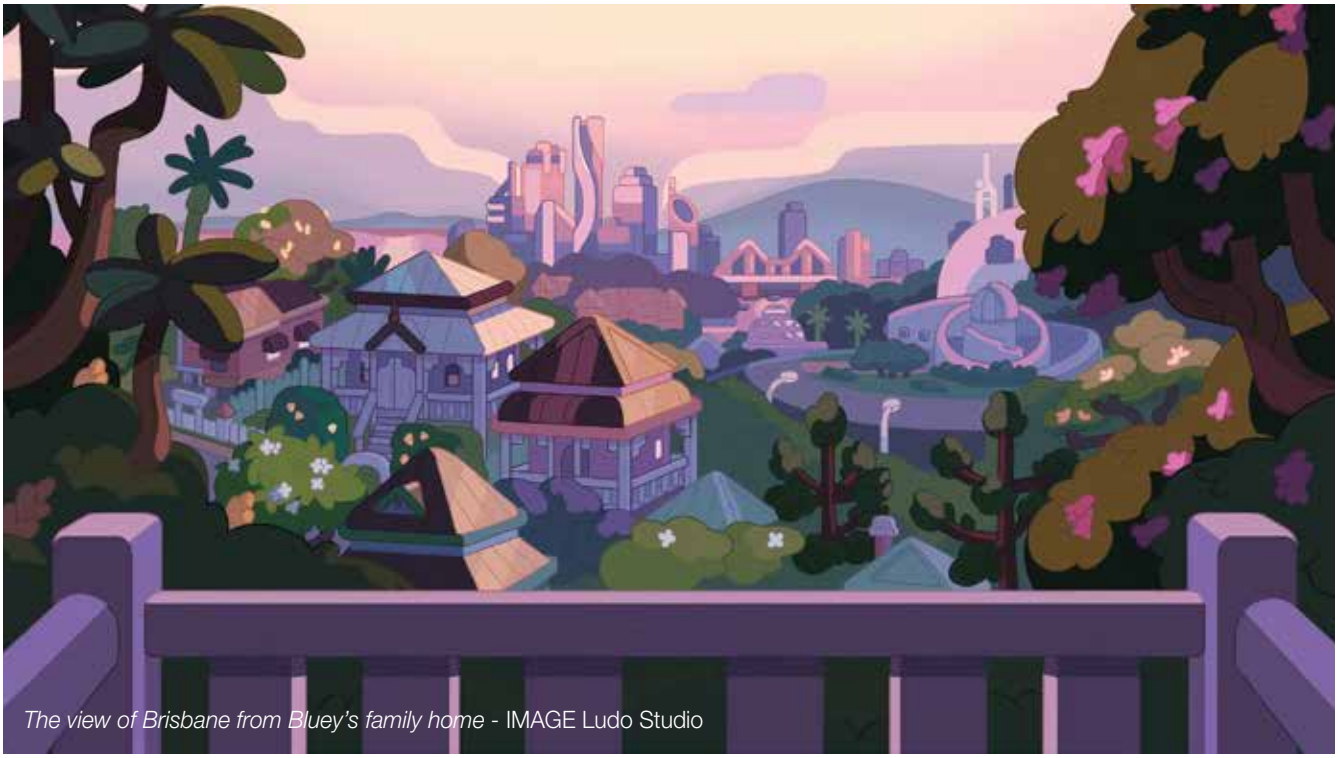
A scene from 'Bluey' - IMAGE Ludo Studio

BLUEY

Created by Queensland production company Ludo Studio, Logie and Emmy-winning ***Bluey*** follows a six year-old Blue Heeler who turns everyday family life into extraordinary adventures.

We recently sat down for a chat with creator and writer **Joe Brumm,** art director **Costa Kassab,** series two and three director **Rich Jeffrey** and series one art director **Catriona Drummond** to discuss and consider the 'cinematography' behind this beautifully animated show.

- by James Cunningham



The view of Brisbane from Bluey's family home - IMAGE Ludo Studio

Bluey is a home-grown Aussie success story. First airing 2018, the show about an anthropomorphic six-year-old Blue Heeler puppy and her family was created by Joe Brumm alongside Queensland production company Ludo Studio.

The show was co-commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the British Broadcasting Corporation, and after only two seasons so far, has not only earned the Logie Award for Most Outstanding Children's Program in 2019 but also an International Emmy Kids Award. *Bluey* was renewed for a third series in October 2020.

Set in Brisbane, the show follows Bluey, a Blue Heeler puppy characterised by her abundance of energy, imagination and curiosity. Bluey lives with her mother and father, Chilli and Bandit, and her younger sister Bingo who regularly joins Bluey on adventures.

The show's visuals, including animation and art direction, are beautiful. With overarching themes including a focus on family, growing up and Australian culture, *Bluey* has received consistently high-viewership in Australia and around the world. Each frame of *Bluey* is carefully considered, designed and executed. Visually, the show contains a multitude of nods to our unique Australian landscape, its flora and fauna.

Art director Costa Kassab reflects that from the early days of design to today, the show was always about visually reflecting an authentic view of Australia, specifically Queensland and Brisbane. ***"Whether that's through the abundance of Queenslander architecture to the subtropical diversity of the outdoors, we wanted to look towards the lived experiences of Australians outside the stereotypical outback aesthetic commonly found in media,"*** he says.

Maintaining the idea that these spaces were lived in was just as important. ***"We strived to include details such as messy car interiors, toy strewn playrooms and mundane yet idiosyncratic street details like wheelie bins, bus stops or water meters,"*** says Kassab.

"There's a real beauty to stopping to admire everyday sights, especially within a busy family. An integral visual direction we leaned into once we started curating the drawn style was the rounded-cube 'shape language' of the show," says Kassab. ***"To reflect Bluey's neat, box-like appearance, everything in the world would boast that same essence of parallel lines and elegant simplicity. We're not saying she lives in an 8-bit block world but rather one when lines don't converge too closely cramped to each other and that objects and structures only feature their most prominent and iconic features."***

Followers of *Bluey* who live in or who know Brisbane can admire the way the city has been represented in the show. The background and landscape artwork 'locations' often feature well-known destinations in and around the capital city such Southbank, Brisbane River, the city's skyline and buildings such as Brisbane Planetarium. All of the artists who work on *Bluey* collaborate closely with director Rich Jeffrey and creator Joe Brumm to further piece together the little bits that make the areas more specifically familiar.

The New Farm location in the episode 'Spy Game' comes to mind, where we see Brisbane Powerhouse in the background of a shot and even a scene which takes place at the New Farm Park Toilet Block, which is a really specific reference. The characters and scenes of *Bluey* are grounded in actual locations, and this becomes indicative of the attention to detail on the show.

Kassab explains, ***"I like to take advantage of living where the show is set and visit the places I know will show up in an episode beforehand. As someone who's grown up here, at the very least I can usually call upon my own memories of the places too. Nothing quite compares to the visual notes you make in person."***

To achieve some of these visual landscape references, the team sometimes do location reconnaissance just like any film or television production might. ***"Photo references are***

From 'Bluey' episode The Creek- IMAGE Ludo Studio

invaluable in a busy production," says Kassab. ***"Most of my time at the beginning of an episode isn't even drawing, rather researching and collating photos of everything from places, artworks to film stills. We also sometimes have a location scout who takes photos for us in specific places like local churches or shops while we're in the thick of production."***

"Our style is quite caricatured to harmonise with our simple characters," continues Kassab. ***"We often describe the shape language as 'chunky'. I also feel like in this stylistic process of simplifying shapes and details for cartoons, we get to the core essence of the subject matter. What shapes do you remove and add on a tree to succinctly communicate what type it is? What colours are drowned out in a wistful sunset and which ones are amplified? For me and the viewers, these decisions are what make stylised art so magical to experience as opposed to photorealism. You don't always remember a clear picture of your cherished spaces but you can surely create a purposeful atmosphere."***

With the art of story-boarding, the craft of editing becomes integral when planning an animated series such as Bluey. Creator and writer Joe Brumm explains, ***"The opening title sequence, which is a game of musical statues is emblematic of the approach taken to the storyboarding of the show. Keeping in mind this is a show for four-year-olds who are still learning film grammar. I wanted to avoid making a quick, 'cutty' show. The title sequence is essentially one long shot, which gives our audience the time to track characters properly. This I've tried to continue as much as possible throughout the show, trying to use single shots for as long as possible, only cutting when absolutely necessary."***

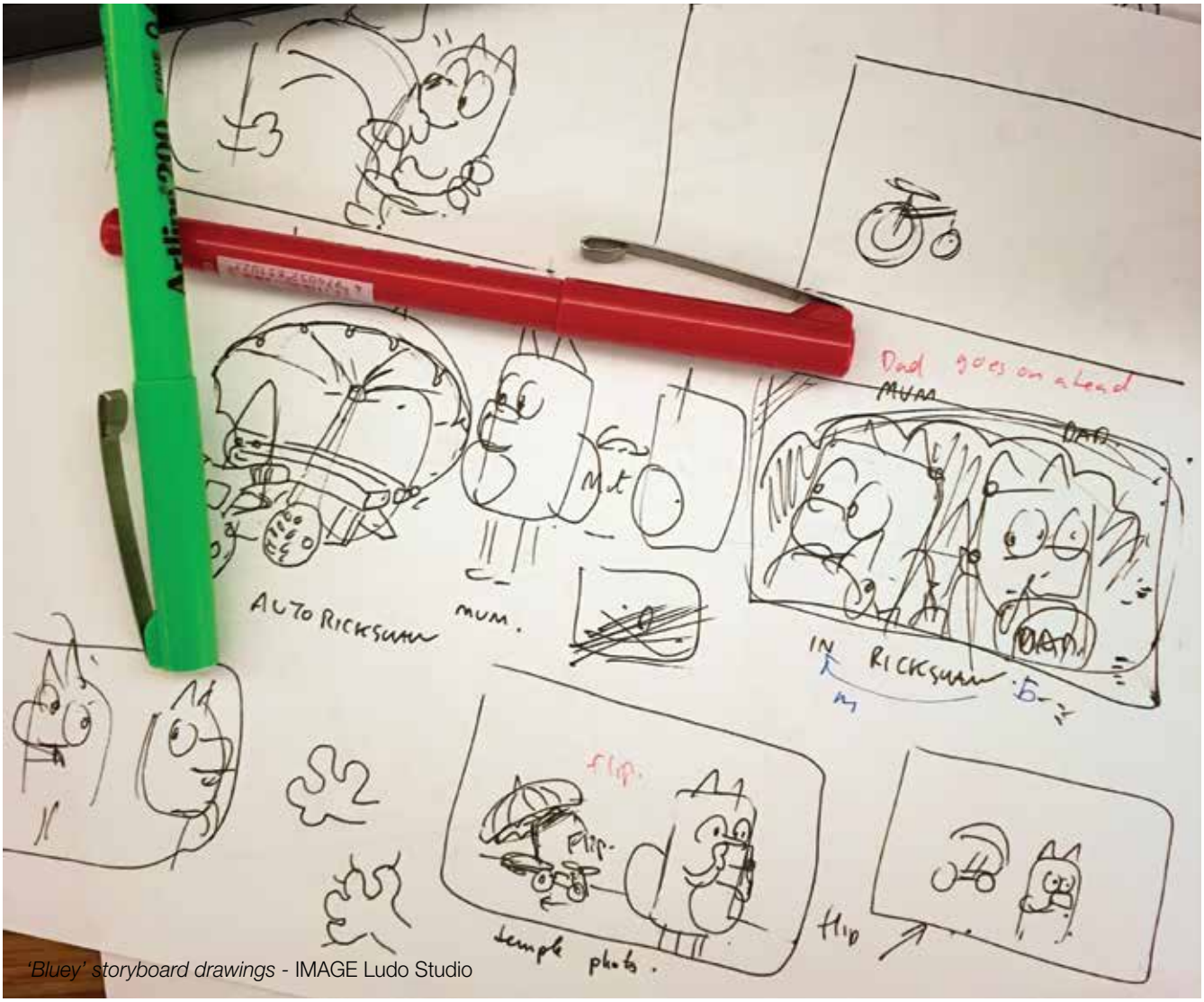
So in thinking specifically about aspects of filmmaking and cinematography such as shot composition and framing, how is the world of Bluey storyboarded? Series two and three director Rich Jeffrey explains, ***"Its generally is a very flat two-dimensional show. Most often our characters are staged on a single plane and aren't often set in different depths from each other. Our storyboard artists keep this in mind when staging our more basic scenes. Of course we break this rule all the time where the script requires it for certain action."***

"Our shot composition and framing is depicted by dialogue and action," Jeffrey continues. "What does the audience need to see? Who's talking and how many people are in the conversation? If we need to show something important then we go close in on it so the audience doesn't miss it. Filmmaking is all about directing the audience to follow the story. You want to make sure you're showing things in the clearest possible manner and not to make continuity confusing. Do you need to remind the audience where everything is situated? Then go wide and show an establishing shot before cutting in on specific shots so that the audience can understand where everything is, geographically."

Storyboards are in a way the first pass at directing a film. It's the key step in the visualisation of the script into picture and something that can represent the structure of the moving image. In animation every aspect of each scene has to be designed and created. Storyboards for animation have to provide a clear depiction of the staging, composition, acting and action for the film. It's a highly creative and demanding role for any storyboard artist.

"We start by giving them a brief where we read through the script with the showrunner, director and board artist," says Jeffrey. ***"We discuss all the main points of the script's locations, dialogue and action. At this meeting we will even have prepared some very simple thumbnail sketches to help describe what shot or camera angles will work best. Our artists then have three weeks to complete a board. In the first week they show us the key layouts for all their main shots in the form of rough drawings or thumbnails; smaller, simple sketches that come before the larger main finished drawings."***

"At this stage we iron out all the things that aren't working



'Bluey' storyboard drawings - IMAGE Ludo Studio

visually and correct it there to avoid any major reworking of finished drawings," Jeffrey continues. ***"Then they build from there, defining the action in more detailed panels still in rough form. We do another pass on that, correcting again any problematic areas before the artist spends the last week cleaning up the board to get it ready for the editor. All without a piece of paper. Everything is done digitally in specific programs designed to build storyboards. The artist is still very much hand-drawing, but it's straight onto the screen via a Cintiq."***

Any cinematographer will tell you how important colour is in film, especially with all the digital grading tools now at our disposal. Colour is a powerful tool for practical readability, characteristic art direction and emotional drive. Costa says, ***"It's important we have purposeful colour schemes and colour direction while maintaining a sense of fun and brightness in the show's design. While we certainly practice consistency across familiar locations such as the family house and neighbourhood, our spectrum is highly dependent on the context of location and plot mood."***

In the episode 'Grandad', yellows, browns and warm greens transport the viewer to a dry rural Queensland bush. Calypso's school and its surroundings, particularly in the episode 'Barky Boats' are by comparison much more deep and vivid, almost like a fairytale forest. ***"The handmade fairy garden and hidden meadow in that episode may seem wildly vibrant at first but the scheme actually repeats yellow, pink and green in a careful pattern that creates the illusion of a boundless rainbow,"*** says Costa. ***"Brisbane is also naturally a colourful place, between its tropical flora and breathtaking sunrise and sunset skies. Even something as simple as noting how saturated the cool blue shadows get during the afternoon goes a long way to make the cartoon world feel like home."***

One episode in particular, 'The Creek', offers the viewer beautiful scenery with almost painting-like compositions. Visually, it's quite stunning. This episode perhaps in particular stands out as the location of the creek was important to the narrative of this particular episode. Series one art director Catriona Drummond adds, ***"You mention that the compositions are 'painting-like'. It's important to note that at a foundational level they are paintings. The backgrounds may be deceptively 'cartoony', but at the rough stages of background development, we are literally 'painting' the colour roughs for these backgrounds."***

"They require the same skillset as traditional painting to make something that is an appealing composition and reflects the story and emotional arc of the episode," says Drummond. ***"I did a lot of plein air painting around Brisbane and South East Queensland so I could capture the specific light for episodes such as 'The Creek'. The location is based on creeks around Brisbane."***

"Brisbane is lucky to have lots of little wild patches all over suburbia like this," continues Drummond. ***"Wandering a little way off a playground into bushland and the local creek is a familiar feeling to a lot of us. I also drew upon my own experiences growing up around the Kedron Brook area in the inner north. I also added my own little touch in the spa scene with the leaves on the rocks. In my own childhood my mum and I used to make little bits of land art like that in the same way Andy Goldsworthy does. Overall I wanted the creek to be a beautiful, secluded natural sanctuary. By the time we reach the scene with the Potoroo, one of those strange magical memories from childhood. Flooded with afternoon light from a place you can't quite remember, that eventually becomes so mysterious it's almost spiritual."***

Within the episode 'The Creek', there's a short sequence where the audience sees a dragonfly fly past Bluey. This sequence demonstrates not one but two cinematic techniques; the use of slow-motion in conjunction with depth-of-field. These two techniques are something that you might usually achieve 'in camera', but here the team behind *Bluey* are recreating camera techniques with animation.

"It's actually easier than you may think," adds Jeffrey. ***"In the case where we may want to add some effects or enhance a shot by giving it extra detail and employ some cinematic techniques we will render all the different elements of a scene out separately on an alpha, meaning that where there is no image or artwork it will be transparent. These separate layers may be the background on its own, then the character or each character separately and then foreground elements. Basically anything you want to control separately. This allows us to take all those layers and re composite them back together in a programme like AfterEffects."***

"We can then edit the sequence by faking depth-of-field by blurring certain layers, adding a 3D camera for multi-plane which is what we did in the case of this shot" says Jeffrey. ***"The slow-motion itself the animator did simply by having it animated very slowly at that point. Quite a manual technique when you think in live action you would simply film it at a high frame rate and slow it down. We can then add extra detail like certain lighting and visual effects. In the case of the dragonfly, we drew extra detail into it as we were seeing it so close up."***

For the adult fans on *Bluey*, the series features a variety of pop culture references from *Indiana Jones* to *Gladiator*, from *Predator* to *2001: A Space Odyssey*, from *The Simpsons* to *Seinfeld*. It's a playground of blink-and-you'll-miss-it easter eggs. One inspired idea saw the aspect ratio for the episode 'The Adventure' change to something more cinematic, adding black bars to the top and bottom of the frame throughout the episode. Something not immediate identifiable to kids.

Kassab explains, ***"In terms of the aspect ratio it was really just a simple visual cue for the audience to shift into a new cinematic world of play. Art direction wise, I had the joy of creating outfits for the fantastical character personas using craft materials. Bluey's felt princess crown is a nod to more historical princess headwear in medieval times. The inspiration actually sparked from costume design in the film Braveheart. I really liked the decision to go down this route because it more uniquely presents the idea of princess outside of renditions of tiaras and gowns."***

There are about twelve major steps in the production of each roughly seven-minute episode of Bluey including; scripts, voice records, storyboards, editing, art direction, design and rigging, backgrounds, layout, animation, visual effects, foley, music and final mix. Each step consists of a whole department of people or in some cases a person dedicated to that task

"One episode is in production for about three to four months throughout all those steps but of course it's a rolling schedule meaning where one episode is complete for that department another one starts," says Jeffrey. ***"At any one time production is across as many as twelve or more episodes in their various stages of completion."***

"We don't do any form of colour-grading on our show as all the final artwork is created up front by our artists in photoshop," he continues. ***"Being a simple show in that respect is easy to create what will be our final art from the start. Our final films however do still go through a process with an external company that runs checks on each episode to make sure our colours and sound are within legal requirements for broadcast. This is also where we view the episode for the last time before it gets delivered. After this it's too late to correct any mistakes so we have to make sure we've caught them all!"***

Kassab adds, "***Within the art department, we've been striving to increase the artistic range of the show, both in subject matter and rendering. Ever since day one, our team has put 100% into making the show look as best as it can. However as you do more and more of a project, you start to catch your own mistakes and better innovate your processes and methods. Throughout each season, we've found more room to dig deeper in the art and its cinematic possibilities."***

"Something else that has come with time is the ability to develop the visual lives and spaces of Bluey's surroundings and her friends," Kassab says. ***"Whether it's taking a trip to a new fictional version of another iconic Brisbane setting or seeing inside more of Lucky's dad's house, it's been very engaging, fleshing out our world bit by bit. New characters are another design adventure. We're always finding new dog breeds to stylise into our show's shape language, or reinvent how far we can take certain visual attributes of certain breeds for narrative purposes."***

The episode 'Sleepytime' is an excellent example of the power of animated visuals. An episode with a visual scope that the team says they couldn't have dreamt of achieving in season one. ***"I feel like we've already had so many medium pushing opportunities during this third season,"*** Kassab says in conclusion, ***"and while it certainly hasn't gotten easier, our restlessness with improving our craft powers us through each day."***

Find *Bluey* on ABC iView and discover it for yourself.

A special thanks to Brumm, Kassab, Jeffrey and Drummond, and also Sasha Folker and the team at Ludo Studio is Brisbane and along with Amy Reiha at Australian Broadcasting Corporation for making this article happen.

James Cunningham is editor of Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

AUSTRALIAN SHORTS

Cinematographer Hossein Khodabandehloo films short horror film
The Untold - ***interview by James Cunningham***

A scene from 'The Untold' - DOP Hossein Khodabandehloo

AC **How did you find yourself working on *The Untold?***

HK I find myself drawn to concepts and I enjoy shooting films that explore them. As for *The Untold*, the concept came about through a dinner conversation between myself, executive producer Will Fernandes and director Ron Kahlon. The idea of the Hindu karmic cycle and its implications of guilt became the main topic throughout dinner. We let the idea sizzle for a while and it really kicked off during lockdown. Kahlon presented a script treatment and we were instantly hooked.

The three of us are huge fans of horror films and we have always wanted to dive into the genre.

I would be lying if I said that I wasn't nervous when deciding to lens the film. It was uncharted waters for the whole creative team. Ultimately, the film turned out great and I'm really happy I said yes!

AC **What was the initial visual concept for how the film would look?**

HK The initial script was very different from what is finally on screen. I initially envisioned the film to be slightly moody with vivid colours. I wanted the aesthetics to have a retro and saturated look. As the script went through development, the story and intention began to change.

The new approach laid in the narrative's sense of ambiguity. In specific, the main character Sonia, played by Laila Thaker, suffers from remorse to a point that her hallucination blurs her sense of reality and ultimately leads to her demise. It was then that I knew I had to dive deep into the character's psych. The film had to be visually really dark.

I drew inspiration from cinematographer Xavi Giménez's work on the feature film *The Invisible Guest* (2016). I love how he was able to make everyday activities and locations look really sinister and ambiguous by heightening the mundane environment around the character. I added my own spin adding a camera motif; we always see Sonia in a mid-shot whenever she is about to go through a breakdown.

AC **What was your collaboration like with the production design team, early on in pre-production?**

HK Like all short films, the budget was really tight. Unfortunately, we didn't have a production designer. Instead, we did our best to find locations that matched our vision. It took us four months to find the right spots and we struck gold when we found a 100-year-old weather board house near Warburton, Victoria, and a secluded yet accessible forest nearby. The house's crooked foundations, furniture and size matched what we wanted. To top it off, it was a rent-able holiday house. As for the forest, it was sparse enough for us to work safety. We were honestly very lucky and I wouldn't recommend proceeding without a production designer.

AC **How did the show's look develop in terms of the locations, colour palette?**

HK The initial colour pallet was meant to be slightly bluish but as the story evolved and the tone got darker, I realised that a warmer touch would add more dimension to the story. The team decided to style the character with that I mind.

AC **What camera/s and lenses did you chose to shoot *The Untold* and why?**

HK Given that the film was going to be shot in the dark, I decided to use the RED Gemini. The REDs are generally good with shadow retention and the Gemini in particular worked well in low-light scenarios. As for lenses, I decided to go with the Zeiss MK I standard speeds. I wanted a vintage lens that had aesthetical flaws yet still provide a clinical enough look to represent the mundane environment. The Zeiss MK I had the traditional 'Zeiss look' with a touch of funk.

I was very lucky to be sponsored both the camera and lenses I wanted by a good friend, Hemil Shah who runs Full Filmy Rentals. He loved the idea and passion that the collective group showed and ultimately, he himself got infatuated.

AC **Can you talk a bit about the crew in your own camera department? Had you worked with your crew before, and what was collaboration like within your own department on *The Untold*?**

HK *The Untold* had a tight shooting schedule along with some very long and intricate movements. I decided to shoot the car scenes in a multi-camera setup to save time. My rockstar assistant camera Lewis Rodan doubled up as second camera operator for those takes. We also had quite a few Steadicam shots. My champion gaffer, Hannah Palmer, doubled up as the Steadicam operator. The camera team definitely had to hustle for this shoot and I

A scene from 'The Untold' - DOP Hossein Khodabandehloo

am eternally grateful to them.

Everyone on my team knew how I work and there wasn't much to be said. We complemented each other very well and the camera team ran very smoothly even though the schedule was tight. We had dollies, Steadicam, handheld shots and jibs. That's quite a bit for a small team but everyone soldiered on to make it happen. The grips, Shah and his team, were constantly moving. Till today, I don't know how Palmer, was able to double up as both my gaffer and Steadicam operator. They are definitely a rock-solid unit.

AC **Did the horror and suspense aspect of the show change your approach to cinematography, as opposed to shooting drama or comedy?**

HK It was definitely an eye-opener for me. I am used to filming robust and flexible scenarios. With the horror and suspense genre, everything lay in precision. From lighting, movement, beats and all the way down to the duration of each take. I have always been a rather meticulous cinematographer but *The Untold* has taught me how to be even more precise.

AC **How did you achieve lighting in your interior scenes, as well as your night exterior locations?**

HK The aesthetics of *The Untold* lies heavily on a cluster-phobic environment and an innately mundane yet dark setting. The two notions are rather conflicting and each scene had to be intricately lit. I always strive to light my scenes exactly how I want it in camera. That includes the colour tones and my gaffer knew exactly what I wanted.

The forest exteriors were all night shoots. The director wanted the exterior scenes to have a near noir look. It was the first time that I under lit my frame to achieve such a look. I decided to light up the surrounding forest while keeping the shooting locale lit by practicals which were the car head lights and a torch light. This gave us an ambiguous feeling that there might be people nearby yet far enough to be forgotten.

We shot day for night in the interiors. I wanted the house to have an ambiguous temporal feel and as such I chose not to have any ambient light coming in.

AC **As a cinematographer, how do you 'find your frames'?**

HK In terms of frames, I worked with what I had and embraced the location's architecture. I chose to use wider lenses and that in turn showed the characters and their relation to the immediate surrounds. I ended up framing a lot of unsettlingly straight lines which worked out well for the horror genre.

AC **Can you talk to us about post-production? How involved were you in this process?**

HK I have an open relationship with the director. Given the fact that I was once an editor, he values my input during post-production. I would come in to give small feedback when asked. We had an amazing editor, Delaney Murphy. She got the essence of the film right from the first draft.

AC **Who was your colourist and what was the intention going into the grade?**

HK When it comes to the grade, I usually spearhead the process. For *The Untold*, we approached a longtime friend, Jaimie Manners CSI from Sandbox Productions. Manners is an amazing colourist and he knew what I wanted from the get go. He understood my style in general and there wasn't much to be explored.

AC **Do you have a favourite shot or sequence in *The Untold*? Why?**

HK My favourite shot would be a close-up of Sonia's expression in the forest. It is extremely dark and also a moment where I was extremely uncomfortable at how dark it was. A portion of her face literally faded into black. I was constantly double checking with the director to see if it was right. In the end, it turned out really well and I am happy I didn't do any tweaks.

AC **Finally, with the benefit of hindsight, what would you do differently or what would you change?**

HK If I could turn back time, I would factor in more time. Even though we had a healthy shooting schedule and a small shot list, the intricacies of lighting and blocking extremely moody scenes took a while.

Ultimately, the collective team learnt a lot from our first attempt at the horror genre. We are hoping to make a sequel and the lessons learnt will go a long way in shaping it.

Hossein Khodabandehloo is a cinematographer working in the advertising industry.

James Cunningham is editor of Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

SPOTLIGHT ON BRAZIL

A conversation with cinematographer Larry Machado on *Vento Seco (Dry Wind)*, an exploration of sexuality, obsession and life in rural Brazil - ***interview by James Cunningham***

Sandro (Leandro Faria Lelo) in 'Dry Wind' - DOP Larry Machado

The area around Catalão in Brazil's state of Goiás is dry, very dry. In July, a dry wind and low humidity parch the skin of a small city residents. Sandro (a brilliant Leandro Faria Lelo) divides his days between the city club, work, soccer with friends and city parties. He has a relationship with Ricardo (Allan Jacinto Santana), his co-worker. But his routine begins to change with the arrival of Maicon (a truely terrific Rafael Teóphilo), a boy who pikes up his interest and of which everyone knows very little.

Rcently nominated for Best Feature Film at the Berlin International Film Festival, sexual fantasy intrudes on sexual reality in Daniel Nolasco's playful, explicit, and stunningly beautiful *Vento Seco (Dry Wind)* from visionary Brazilian cinematographer Larry Machado.

AC **How did get involved with *Dry Wind,* and what was the original vision for the film prior to starting pre-production?**

LM *Vento Seco* started in 2016, when I met director Daniel Nolasco and we filmed together the short film Neptune, which is actually a shorter and somewhat conservative version of *Vento Seco*. It was a great experience for us to start working together and for me to begin to understand what it was like to film in the city of Catalão, Nolasco's hometown.

From then on, we made another short and two documentary films, one of them *Mr. Leather* (2019), which is a documentary about the leather fetish scene in São Paulo. This was an important experience with aesthetics, and with people within the leather and BDSM communities.

Vento Seco was part of the journey that we started in these previous films. It was as if I had already done that. For me this film is a contemplation of fetishism, extravagance, and also of melancholy, explored through simple living situations about friendship, death and love in that city. In my view, the film's tension resides in the opposition between Sandro's restraint and the film's extravagant aesthetics.

AC **As cinematographer, what was your collaboration like with the production designer Carol Breviglieri during pre-production on the film?**

LM have known and worked with Breviglieri since my first years in film, we have a great working relationship. We worked a lot with mood boards that we often shared with each other, with the participation of Nolasco and also art producer Dan Lemos.

Breviglieri also kept me up to date with the costumes, which is a fundamental factor in the aesthetics of the film. It was our costumes, with vibrant material colours, that generated various forms of reflection, with several pieces in leather and also in latex that created very interesting sparkles. I worked to make lighting add value to these pieces. They were also important for the choice of our colour palettes, although I find it quite varied.

AC **Colour is such an important part of the film. Can you talk about your liberal use of colour, and the colour palate you chose for the film?**

LM Much of the proposal for the use of colour in the film would be to be a counterpoint to the figure of Sandro. The entire cinematographic apparatus, camera movements, zoom, lighting and colours, would be a way of expressing what could be inside the character; what he 'saw' but did not express with his body.

We envisioned the lighting of the film in a theatrical way, very influenced by Rainer Werner Fassbinder's iconic queer classic *Querelle* (1982, cinematography by Xaver Schwarzenberger), which gave us a great freedom in the creation with the colours. Everything was possible. Any lighting effect could be a good idea for almost every scene.

There was a lot of planning, but some decisions regarding colour and lighting came up during the shoot. The red light pulsates in Ricardo's car when Sandro refuses to scratch it, pink is present in several scenes in which Maicon appears and echoes the colour of his swim trunks.

The city itself brought many lighting ideas,

Rafael Teóphilo as Maicon in In 'Dry Wind' - DOP Larry Machado

the centre of the city was covered with RGB LED strips, some squares were lit in green, the green and cyan of metal vapour and mercury lamps from the streets and the fertiliser factory, in some way, influenced our choices.

Colour became a way to highlight our dream sequences, such as a night scene and a golden shower, or when a character enters a lake with the dog, the policeman scene and the blood moon when Sandro meets Ricardo and Maycon together. They are scenes of almost unique colours, violet, blue, yellow and red.

AC **What factors did you take into consideration when choosing your camera and lenses. What camera and lenses did you shoot this film with, and why?**

LM In the region of Brazil where I live, it is not a place with a very active audiovisual market. It has grown a lot in the last ten years, but it is still very small. We do not have large rental companies with many equipment options and with more affordable prices as in Rio de Janeiro or São Paulo.

In addition, policies to promote cinema in Brazil are very fickle, especially now with our right-wing Bolsonaro government. We are always thinking about ways to produce and market our films completely independently and be able to do this in the best possible quality. We acquired a Red Scarlet Dragon in 2018, which is a robust camera, with a texture that I like a lot and with a good dynamic range, and in my opinion it is a very versatile camera and fits many proposals.

We used two Angenieux 16-40mm lenses and a 45-120mm Optimo, which are excellent lenses and would give us the zoom range we needed. We use the 45-120mm in most scenes and also the Angenieux 24-290mm Optimo just for one scene where we needed greater distance.

AC **Can you speak briefly about your own crew in the camera department?**

LM Chico Macedo was our key grip and Elinaldo Revis our gaffer, they are a very important duo for cinema in Goiás, with incredible experience and professionalism, and made it possible to do impressive things in this film, they taught me a lot that I understand by cinema today. The electrician were Rosa Caldeira and his assistant Janaína Ribeiro. Jarves Calixto and Carlos Sergio were our grips. Kaco Olímpio was our focus puller, we met in college and I had already worked with him in several different roles taking on different roles. Tothi Cardoso was second assistant camera, he is a great friend and my partner in our production company. We met in college. Luciano Evangelista was our logger and editing assistant, also a longtime friend.

AC **I really loved your use of those neon/LED strip lights throughout the film. I noticed you used them in multiple locations, as well as in a number of vehicles. Can you talk a little about your decision to use them, and generally about your approach to lighting on the film?**

LM The neon lighting aesthetic came out of image research, not just from films, and together with Nolasco and Breviglieri we think about all the pratical lighting elements. We curated a collection of practical LED lights; RGB of all types, tapes, hoses, spots, which we would then use in our locations; the factory, in cars, in the nightclub, in the dressing room, for example.

I think the use of 'neon' or 'led tube' is a global trend, which ended up being a facility that I found to give all the colour we wanted for Vento Seco. I was also influenced by many Brazilian pop and funk videoclips. I started to think that it would be interesting for the film to use them as practical lights, to function as an artifice that also dated the film at that time and was also a reference to these video clips that I find visually significant.

Querelle was very much on our mind, and we aimed to be as extravagant with the light as Sandro was so restrained. The LED tubes were a way of bringing

A scene from Daniel Nolasco's 'Dry Wind' - DOP Larry Machado

the colour and aesthetics we wanted in a 'modernised' way.

Then, there is a culture of very strong 'automotive lights' that we mentioned, in which cars are covered with RGB LED strips, even a boat we used was covered with them. This culture is quite heterosexual, which was another reason for working with these codes within the film and reframing them.

We used a kit of four tubes of 60cm Andromeda CameTV, which responded much more than I expected. They were very practical and we used them in practically every scene of the film.

AC **I'm wondering if you had any specific film references in *Dry Wind*? There is a shot of the main character with fireworks going off in the background which reminded me of a similar shot of Heath Ledger in *Brokeback Mountain* with fireworks going off in the background. Was this an homage? And what other filmic references did you use?**

LM *Vento Seco* has several tributes to several queer films, symbols and characters, very direct references and some scenes are reproductions of scenes from these films. Sandro's scene with Maicon's motorcycle is a direct reference to *Scorpio Rising* (1969, cinematography by Kenneth Anger) and the scene where Sandro enters the lake with the dog is an homage to *Boys in the Sand* (1971, cinematography by Wakefield Poole). And yes, also *Brokeback Mountain* (2005, cinematography by Rodrigo Prieto AMC ASC) among others.

For photography the main references are *Scorpio Rising*, Querelle as well as cult queer classic Bijou (1972, cinematography also by Wakefield Poole). *Scorpio Rising* is a really beautiful film. For people who only shoot in digital, the texture that the film has is something that always impresses me, the way it illuminates with unnatural hard lights with unjustified sources is something unusual nowadays. The tendency is to use several diffusion layers in all light sources.

The film has a 'glow' and some very interesting lens distortions, and so does Querelle and Bijou. This glow effect was extensively worked on in *Dry Wind.* Bijou also influenced me in the way of lighting, the use of colours, that 'glow', lens flares, as well as the behaviour of the camera and use of zoom. It seems to me that it is a very vivid camera, with a certain impression and improvisation that I really like.

I would like to have brought this aesthetic from the 1960s to the 1980s closer and tested some lens filters, but it was not possible. We used a black Pro Mist in most scenes and added more glow and flares during post-production.

AC **I'd love to ask you about shooting the amusement park ride sequence. How did this sequence come about, what was the planning behind it and how did you film it?**

LM This was one of the scenes that worried me the most. It was a very long sequence and with details that happened during the scene; all of this spinning. I knew I could count on our key grip Chico Macedo and best boy Jarves Calixto. We paid a visit to the Kamikazi ride a few weeks earlier, which was enough for Macedo to figure out the kind of equipment we would need.

He set up a structure with tubes, handcuffs and rods, and placed the camera outside the ride. It was a very secure structure and we didn't need to choose a more compact camera. To illuminate, we again use the led tubes and two 1200w HMIs with cyan gels.

I believe that for actor Leandro Faria Lelo (Sandro) it was much more difficult. It is really very difficult to stay focused spinning like that.

AC **Were there considerations for shooting the more sexually explicit scenes in the film? How were nude shower scenes shot, was there a more limited crew, how were the sex scenes planned and blocked? What was it like filming them for you behind the camera and for the actors in front**

A scene from the film 'Dry Wind' - DOP Larry Machado

of the camera?

LM In order to shoot the nude scenes, there was nothing very special that doesn't happen in any film. Each scene is always different. The nude scenes in the bathroom were quiet, there was no need to reduce the crew, it was a very relaxed environment.

For the sex scenes, more concentration and silence was needed. We tried to shoot continuously for a few minutes without cutting, and re-positioning our camera only as much as needed. In some scenes, it was necessary to make more rehearsed camera movements, which required concentration and great patience on the part of our actors, who were extremely professional. There's a sex scene which takes place at a livestock trade fair. We dressed the location with some black tarpaulins and tried to be discreet, so as not to attract the attention of the employees and people walking by.

In the leather bar scene, in which a cowboy (João Sá) masturbates on another man (Marcelo D'Avilla) in a dog mask, we shot the scene for real. The whole team was involved. The scene had a certain timing that was created by the camera movement and zoom. João Sá is an actor who specialises in live performance and has incredible control of his body. If every movement was correct, assistant director Larissa Fernandes would give the actor a cue and shortly after he would reach orgasm for us, which we would film. We only needed one take. For me it is very calm to shoot these scenes, I just take great care in making sure nothing goes wrong so as not to disturb the actors.

AC **How involved were you in the post-production process? Was your footage graded and if so, who did the grade? How involved were you involved with this process?**

LM The colouring was done by Dodô, Adonias Dantas at the O2 Pós Studio. The post-production process started with camera tests on some locations during pre-production, when we tested looks, mainly for the day-for-night scenes, but nothing very special and without creating look-up tables (LUTs) in advance.

Colour grading took two weeks, during which the director and I followed the whole process, and for me Dodô's colour work which was very surprising. He understood very well that we wanted extremely vibrant colours, high-contrast and that we were open to possible styling with glow, flares and whatever else was needed.

AC **Do you have a favourite shot or sequence in *Dry Wind*? Why?**

LM I really like the sequence we shot in the leather bar. I think it's a synthesis and the apex of all the fetish and energy that the film brings. I like how it starts, I like the silence that remains throughout the sequence and the slow pace and progression of events that happen as we lead the audience to the final conclusion. I also like how the scene brings with it many fetish codes shown in small details and of course, the final orgasm which is really beautiful.

Another scene I like, and it's the opposite of the leather bar scene, is the scene of Sandro's conversation with Laby (Larissa Sisterolli) on the banks of the lake during twilight. It's a very simple and raw scene that puts our feet on the ground, and makes us understand a lot of things even if not verbalised.

AC **Finally, looking back on what you and the director had originally set out to achieve making *Dry Wind,* do you think you succeeded?**

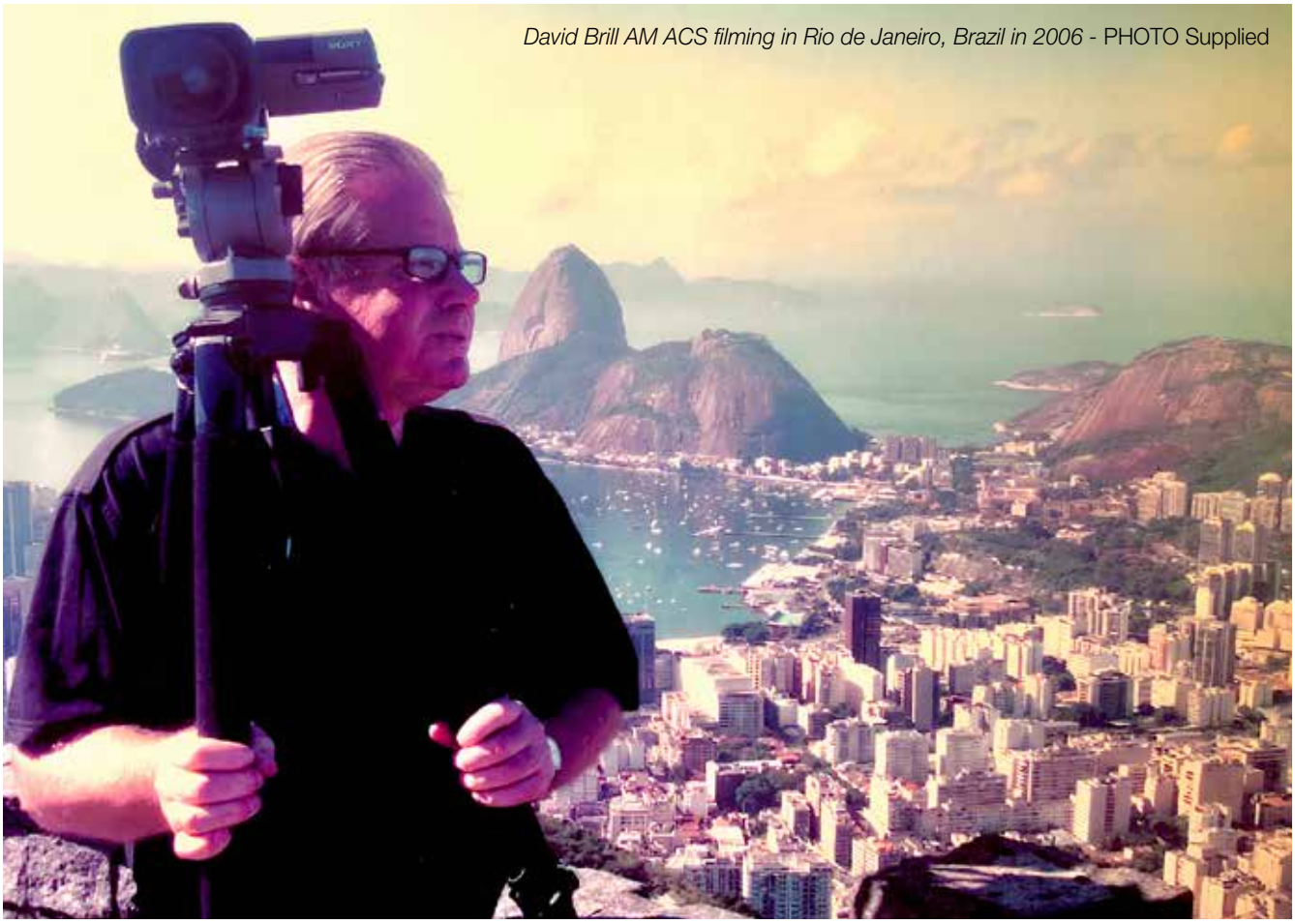
LM We are all very proud of what we've achieved in making this film. Many things changed along the way, but they have led to a film that we are very proud of.

Larry Machado holds a degree in Cinema and Audiovisual from the State University of Goiás, Brazil. He serves as cinematographer for films, television series and music videos.

James Cunningham is editor of Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

THE EYE BEHIND THE LENS

Australian Cinematographers Society Ambassador and Hall of Fame member David Brill AM ACS - ***by Kevin Hudson ACS***



David Brill AM ACS filming in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2006 - PHOTO Supplied

In Buster Keaton's silent cinematic masterpiece *The Cameraman* (1928, cinematography by Reggie Lanning and Elgin Lessley) reference is made for us to *"not forget the news reel cameraman ... the daredevil who defies death to give us pictures of the world's happenings."*

In the world of news cinematography, the name Damien Parer is a heroic one who gave us unforgettable film of muddy footprints slipping down the treacherous Kokoda Track in his Oscar winning film *Kokoda Front Line* (1942). Introducing us to the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels, those Papuan heroes, aiding wounded Australian soldiers. Footage that captured a nation's identity, since the Second World War. Parer was inducted into the Australian Cinematographers Society's Hall of Fame in 2008.

Another brilliant cinematographer was Neil Davis ACS whose courage and skill in the art of storytelling encouraged teenagers like me into a career of video journalism. Tim Bowden's book 'One Crowded Hour' is a great read for any young cinematographer. In the same breath rolls out the name of cinematographer David Brill AM ACS. This genius of the lens was already a legend by the time I began my career in news cinematography thirty plus years ago.

"What I try to do is get into the soul of the people," says Brill. Weeks into my career I was introduced to Brill, in pubs from Balmain to Paddington. A news cameraman in training, catching up between his international assignments. And he was filming for his beloved *Four Corners* program. ***"There were two things I wanted to do. One was to be a photographer for LIFE magazine the other a cinematographer on Four Corners."***

Brill has covered peacekeeping missions, conflicts and wars from Vietnam (including at the fall of Saigon), Somalia, Afghanistan, Israel, Palestine, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Uganda, Guatemala, Laos, Iraq (four times), both Gulf Wars, The Falklands, Cambodia, Sarajevo, Serbia and Grenada.

Brill became the only living cinematographer inducted to the Australian Media Hall of Fame when in 2018 he joined cinematographers Damian Parer and Neil Davis. Brill had been inducted into our ACS Hall of Fame in 2006. He is a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) and our own ACS Ambassador. He is a founding member of the ACS Tasmania Branch (since 1964) and is always very proud to promote the Society at every opportunity he gets around the world. Brill has received international recognition with six United Nations Media Peace Awards, and in 1975 a National Thorn EMI award for his coverage of the 'Fall of Saigon'.

Fortunately for me the end of the eighties was still a time of the news camera assistant. There were a lot of film cinematographers working in the industry. The first cameraman I worked with was former Cinesound chief cameraman Kevin Roche. Roche had six decades behind the lens as a storyteller and had been a consultant to the Australian film, *Newsfront* (1978, cinematography by Vincent Monton ACS, and camera operator Louie Irving ACS). Roche had covered the actual devastating Maitland floods of 1955.

The film to video transition occurred early in television news, current affairs and documentary cinematography. The broadcast video picture could now be

sent via microwave and satellite links to newsrooms and transmitted to the audience so they didn't have to wait for film to be processed.

The number on the television dial meant little to Brill as he would pass on his knowledge to those in his company. All you had to do was ask questions and listen. Brill is an incredible storyteller both in conversation and on screen as cinematographer. ***"We are the storytellers, reporting from the scene. Filming the pictures, lighting, sound recording, interviewing, driving the style and direction of the assignment,"*** he explains. ***"The reporter rarely came out on the road throughout my early career. It was all left to me. It was what I did and what was expected of me. To tell the story."***

It was outside the 'Meet the Nominees' event at the 2019 National ACS Awards in Melbourne that I ran into Brill. It was like we had not been working or living in different parts of the country. Later on that evening, Brill presented me a Gold Tripod, a moment I will never forget. I like to remind him that there was a hundred years of cinematography experience on stage at that moment. ***"Almost,"*** he says.

Brill has spent decades being the eye behind the lens roaming the world filming peacekeeping missions, conflicts and humanitarian stories and wars from Vietnam until the present day. He was the first Australian network bureau cameraman in the United States, the Soviet Union and Vietnam (Hanoi) for ABC-TV Australia. Providing documentary cinematography for ABC's *Four Corners*, SBS Television on *Dateline* as a video journalist, reporting and filming his own stories and filming for international networks across Europe. ***"Reporting the highs and lows of humanity so that the audience can try and understand the reasons why,"*** he says. ***"It is the people that I care about the most."***

"The hardest part of being a war cinematographer is not knowing where the battlelines are. You feel very vulnerable," says Brill. ***"There's no frontline. In the wars I've covered the enemy can be at the end of the street like when I was in Sarajevo. They can be in the villages, the forest, the jungle, the desert or the city. The enemy can walk around the corner in front of you. There is the constant worry of stepping on a landmine or whether there is a sniper that has you in their scope. You can be anywhere and a bullet can hit you. It's the tension day in and day out of just not knowing where they are and what is going to happen."*** I asked David if he would go to a war zone again and the answer is ***"Oh yes. Of course I would, for the story."***

Brill's journey began growing up in Longford, Tasmania. A small country town just like Sorell, in Tasmania, where Neil Davis grew up. Brill recalls, ***"Once a week Life Magazine would be delivered to the newsagent and I would run down and would be the first one to get it. I read it from cover to cover. It was the power of the pictures that got me in. Life Magazine had it all, it was the brilliance of the photography. Photographers like Larry Burrows, English-born Australian Tim Page and Sir Donald McCullin captured my attention."*** As a student studying at Scotch College, Launceston, Brill had the photography bug as a 14-year-old. Brill was President of the local Kodak Club and received further encouragement at 16-years-old when his father ***"bought me a Rolleicord 2 1/4 inch square which was my first professional camera."***

Brian Curtis & Associates in Hobart gave Brill his start as a trainee photographer at the biggest commercial photographic studio in Tasmania. ***"It was Curtis' brother, Warwick Curtis, a superb photographer and cinematographer who gave me tremendous opportunities and really helped me,"*** says Brill. ***"I have always been grateful for his wisdom that he passed onto me. I completed my cadetship and left to take up a job as a field photographer for the Tasmanian Government, Hydro Electric Commission."***

Picture magazines including LIFE Magazine were beginning to lose their prominence with television's introduction. It was 1960 when television was first transmitted across Tasmania. So, by 1966, it was still pretty new. ***"I thought that cinematography, particularly news, current affairs and documentary programmes such as Four Corners were so important and television was so powerful, it probably could be better than working for LIFE Magazine,"*** he says.

Brill embraced his new opportunity as a trainee cine-cameraman with ABC-TV in Hobart. Two senior news camera staff were on annual leave and Brill was now covering the catastrophic 1967 Tasmanian Bushfires. With a Bell & Howell 16mm camera, he was surrounded by the 'Black Tuesday' firestorms. ***"Many homes in Hobart and surrounding areas were being consumed by these dreadful fires, and 62 lives were lost,"*** says Brill. ***"It is the sound and smell that warns you of the approaching front. The dreadful thick smoke arrives and it consumes you. A blanket of embers fill the sky before that smoke turns day to night."*** The 22-year-old trainee stood his ground among the island state's worst bushfires. Among all this devastation Brill found time to assist families whose houses were already on fire, by helping them remove paintings, furniture and books.

Brill filmed the fires with his Bell & Howell. ***"A beautiful camera,"*** he says. ***"Three turret lenses: 10, 50 and a 75. One hundred feet of film, two minutes and forty seconds, that's all you had to tell a story. You were expected to film a story on one roll. Film wasn't cheap and neither was the processing. The ABC didn't own camera cars so we had to use our own car on assignments and they gave us some compensation. It was late in the afternoon and my film needed to be at the laboratory for processing before the news deadline. The only access road back was surrounded by fire. There I was driving my brand new gold Cortina down the road and by the time I got past the fire the extreme heat had blackened and blistered the paint on my car."***

Witnessing all this devastation the young news cinematographer learned the power of good pictures. ***"When the film was sent around the world and brought aid to Tasmania I realised just how powerful good pictures and good journalism could be,"*** he says.

David won the Visnews 'Cameraman of the Month' Award for this footage from those bushfires. It was a £10 cheque from Visnews, now Reuters. A year before the Australian Government had introduced the decimal system and the average 1967 Australian wage was $58 per week. Television had become the most important means of communication, touching people more intimately than any other medium.

"I started in news when no one came out with you. No reporters, no producers. You did the whole lot. You were the storyteller. No standups like there is today. Just powerful cinematography and the script was written back in the newsroom to my pictures."

David's early skills had him appointed to be the first ABC cine-cameraman based in Singapore, covering South East Asia including the Vietnam War. ***"I was engaged at the time, and they asked if I was getting married,"*** he says. ***"Then they got cold feet, just in case something happened to me like I got badly injured or even killed while reporting from Vietnam. They took the job away. It still upsets me fifty five years later. It was a job of a lifetime."***

David reflects ***"on the other hand, looking back, I was sent to Sydney to work on Four Corners, a program I had loved since I was fifteen years of age. I learnt so much in many ways. It wasn't long after joining the Four Corners team that I went to Vietnam. I was now filming documentary length stories on the Vietnam War and working with people like Mike Willesee AO and John Penlington. They were wonderful reporters, so many wonderful people in my***

The fall of Saigon, David Brill AM ACS (centre) in 1975 - PHOTO Derk Halstead

time on Four Corners. My sound recordist Robert Sloss is still my oldest friend to this day. The reporters changed with each assignment but he and I had a wonderful working relationship and great respect for each other."

Brill admired war cinematographer and fellow Tasmanian, Neil Davis. ***"What I learned from Davis is if you think it's worth it for the story, to go the extra mile,"*** he says. ***"It's not just about a good shot, it's making good sequences, that's what television storytelling is about."*** Davis filmed for Visnews. ***"All the American networks wanted Davis to work for them. He was the star. Davis was happy working for Visnews because it gave him freedom to cover the war how he saw it. Davis picked up early how to be not only a great cameraman but also a great reporter. He had been trained in cinematography at the Tasmanian Government Film Unit, shooting 35mm film for many years. Most people don't know that. He was developing into a wonderful documentary cinematographer. He loved cinematography like I do."***

Davis had a big effect on Brill's life. ***"In Vietnam and Cambodia we would sit at the end of the day in bars and chat, having a beer, I would just listen to him and learn from his experiences on how to cover war,"*** ***says Brill. "It's in the faces, hands and mannerisms, that's where the power of television is found. People make the story. Anyone can shoot guns going off. But what do those guns do to the innocent? The suffering."***

In one of Brill's films we see a young girl being brought into a Saigon hospital on her grandmother's back. ***"This child had part of her leg blown off in crossfire,"*** he says. ***"Her parents had been killed. She just stared at me. She kept staring at me with her big eyes. Staring right through the lens. It was so powerful. There was just no expression, nothing."*** Brill knew the impact that this child would have on the audience. ***"She said it all about the horror of war."***

After filming a sequence with her artificial leg being put on, the staff raised her up at the hand rails to encourage her to walk a little and gain her own independence. ***"I zoomed in very slowly on her face and held it for a long time to get the expression on her face and she began ever so slightly to smile. It was so powerful to witness. I just kept that sequence going and going and going,"*** says Brill. Two minutes of the forty-five minute Four Corners program was taken up with this one piece of film. The following day it is believed that former prime minister Gough Whitlam said at Parliament House, 'Did you see Four Corners, comrades? Did you see that little girl? What are we doing in Vietnam?'

The Vietnam War was the first televised war in history. The world's media were reporting daily on the American troops but the Australian *Four Corners* team of Brill, reporter Mike Willesee and sound recordist Rob Sloss wanted to tell another story from this war zone. Travelling with South Vietnamese forces under the command of General Thieu Quan Tri, the small crew arrived by military helicopter to a well-known Viet Cong village. They leapt off the helicopter and jumped onto an armoured personnel carrier (APC). ***"We had a slate board, it was a bit like Hollywood. Slate one and off we go into battle. It seemed unnecessary that we needed to use slates especially when the bullets were going off all around you,"*** says Brill.

The cinematographer had a French Eclair 16mm camera and the film magazine jammed. ***"I thought, oh damn, what do I do now,"*** he says. ***"I called out 'Stop stop, stop the battle… please!!!' and the Colonel was there with me so they stopped the advance."***

The tropics were so hot that the film had fallen off the bobbin. It was well over 40 degrees and the changing bag was absorbing the heat. ***"My film was so soft in the bag, it was no longer tightly rolled,"*** tells Brill. ***"My hands were sweating as I handled the loosely bound film. My heart is stopping now re-living the moment. It felt like an eternity rolling the film back on the bobbin, it was most likely ten minutes later and the battle restarted. Fortunately I managed to save a lot of the footage, all while sitting on the armoured personnel carrier."***

Directing and filming a sixty minute documentary on Cambodia in 1973 for

German television public broadcaster ZDF Television, Brill talks about a time he was caught in no man's land. ***"Mortars were hitting the ground and the shrapnel explodes up, so as long as you lay down low and there is enough distance between it hitting the ground and you, you won't get hit,"*** he says. ***"I had found a small dugout barely three feet long and a foot deep and lay with my head down as the mortars and the bullets wizzed past me. I remember the bullets flying over my head. It is really frightening, you start saying to yourself, what am I doing here?"***

"You won't change the world, but you can make the people aware of what is going on," says Brill. ***"To me, observational cinematography is an education tool. It's a great privilege to do this type of work because it is real. You'll have an interesting life and you're doing something worthwhile."*** Looking back over much of his six decades in filmmaking and news cinematography, Brill can see the importance of his stories. ***"It is in many ways more important now because it's history so it has gone into another dimension. That is what has kept me going through the ups and downs of life."***

Ray Martin AM told *Australian Story* that, ***"David Brill represents the cameraman's lament in television."*** I think he feels, rightly, that he ought to be recognised. But it's a fairly thankless task. At the end of the day, it's going to be some reporter's mug up there that collects the award and meanwhile the cameraman's out there still dodging bullets.

Trying to explain war David says, ***"It's the smell, the noise, the people with their lives destroyed. That is why I think ANZAC Day is very important. Words don't need to be spoken. All the diggers know the horror. They know the loss. You can see it in their eyes. It is the mateship and the sense of respecting lost friends, those who never made it home. Those that never got a chance. Lives lost. Remembering that in Vietnam there had been so many people who were conscripted by the Government. Broken bones, broken souls, most of them from my experience have been to hell and back."***

Dateline sent Brill as a video journalist filming a group of Vietnam veterans on a pilgrimage to face the horror of their war. ***"Fifty years had passed since they had been in Vietnam,"*** he says. ***"Many suffering the effects of the war, including PTSD, divorce, alcoholism and drug addiction. The veterans had been told by their psychiatrist to go back to Vietnam. 'Face up to your demons. It will help to take the pain and the guilt away and make you feel better'."*** Through the lens for two weeks Brill watched the guilt and shame leave them. ***"It was the first time in their lives that they were at peace with themselves,"*** he says. It's a moving piece of storytelling called 'Good Morning Vietnam'. The documentary earned Brill one of his six United Nations Peace Media Awards.

David tells me of SBS producer Geoff Parish, ***"It's like having a good editor. They can make such a difference to your story. Parish was like that. He was marvellous, contributing so much to the end result of my stories."*** Brill and Parish worked closely for ten years at *Dateline* and the pair are still great friends. ***"He arranged my work on screen tremendously. He was the best producer I've ever worked with."***

Not wanting to be labelled only as a war cinematographer or a war junkie, Brill recalls when assigned as the first ABC cameraman, producer role in their Moscow bureau. It was November 1989 and Brill was going to Germany for the coming down of the Berlin Wall. Travelling from Moscow gave Brill easy access to East Berlin. With most of the world's media gathering in West Berlin this was a unique opportunity.

Departing the airport, by hire car, Brill arrived at his hotel in the late Autumn afternoon. ***"I could hear the sound of jack hammers,"*** he says. ***"I started to see big industrial lights being turned on. I walked from the hotel and got closer to the wall. There they were beginning to pull down a section of it. Since being built under the cover of darkness in 1961 till now (1989) it had divided the city, divided families."***

"I just couldn't believe this was happening," he says. ***"The wall started to crumble, filming away I looked towards no man's land and West Berlin. The East and West German soldiers were just looking at each other. It was a very strange feeling. For me I was witnessing an important part of world history. When the wall was coming down I picked up some of the grey concrete pieces of the crumbling wall. I put them in my pocket and I still have them at home. Generations of East and West Germans were reunited with their families after 10,316 days of political separation. It was very moving for me".***

"I still love the look of film but video has the advantage that you can go back to your hotel room and look at it," continues Brill. ***"Sometimes I would have thirty 400-foot rolls of film beside my bed for three or four weeks not knowing if there was a scratch on the film or a hair in the gate. So many sleepless nights worrying about that and then there were the times the lab would cook the film. Getting that phone call from the editor saying 'there was something wrong with your stock!' All that wasted time knowing we could not replicate the moment."***

One great moment from Brill's career came when at the New York bureau for ABC Television. Brill was the cameraman and producer who went to Newport to cover the 1983 America's Cup campaign. It would be one of the greatest sporting moments in Australia's history. ABC Radio sent journalist and reporter John Highfield from the London bureau, ***"Highfield was a delightful man and one of the ABC's top foreign correspondents for many years, he was very helpful to me. Holding the reflector and even doing the sound."***

Every day of the six week campaign Brill had a 2.5 minute news story and a 6.5 minute current affairs story to film on Australia II and its secret winged keel. ***"The camera I had was brand new, just out of the box, a Sony 300 SP,"*** he says. ***"I was the first to shoot video for the ABC because at that time there were union problems in Sydney. The camera equipment had to stay in the boxes. I was still shooting film in America until it was sorted out. The problem for me was there were no film cameras left shooting news and current affairs in the United States. I had a CP-16 with magnetic sound strip on the side of the film. The America's Cup was such a big deal that the unions and ABC agreed to give me permission to shoot on videotape."***

"Everybody else in the United States was shooting video and they used to laugh at me coming along with the old CP-16 film camera. 'Hey, Dave, you've still got that old film camera going?' It was quite embarrassing but it was a time of great change," he says.

Australia II had been down one race win to three in the best of seven races. Australia II fought back to three all and it was now the final race. It was about 4.30pm local time and it appeared Australia II was beaten. Brill was grabbing a cup of tea at the bottom level of his media boat. *'Hey what are you doing, Dave'* came a voice. ***"I said, 'we're not going to win. It's over. The Americans are in front. I'll go back up in a minute mate to get the finish.'"*** *'No, you've hit the front!'* he replied. Brill rushed back up to his shooting platform as Australia II was moving in on 'Liberty' and about to go back into the lead. John Bertrand and his team were getting back in front of the Americans. So, at 5:21pm, Brill filmed Australia II crossing the finish line.

"A golden sunset painted the sky behind Australia II as she came in towards Newport Rhode Island," says Brill. ***"My media boat was alongside the victorious Australia II yacht and her crew. I continued to film as Alan Bond jumped on board Australia II, with a case of beer and a large cassette radio playing loudly. The speakers were blasting the Aussie classic***

The fall of Saigon, David Brill AM ACS in 1975 - PHOTO Derk Halstead

'Down Under' by Men at Work. These lyrics made an incredible soundtrack to my pictures showing the joy that had taken over the crew. It was a spectacular moment for the entire crew. Filming this historic event was a great moment for me, too. A truly wonderful experience."

Video was the only way Brill could've got it done. It needed to be edited and sent to New York, before sending it to Australia. Brill recalls, ***"It was wonderful to see your pictures immediately, the quality in those days on video wasn't very good. I felt it was very plastic on screen and didn't have the depth, the feel or grain of film about it but it could get to air and importantly transmitted back to Australia via Visnews almost immediately."***

Visnews New York Bureau Chief John Tulloh looked after the satellite feeds to Sydney. ***"Tulloh has been a great friend of mine for over fifty years and a great mentor who really respects cinematographers,"*** says Brill. ***"He is like a brother to me. ABC Television were incredibly fortunate to have Tulloh as the Head of International Operations for over twenty years. He was loved and respected by all. One of the greats in our business."***

The first ACS member to ever win the Academy Award for Best Cinematography is Dean Semler AM ACS ASC, for his epic feature *Dances with Wolves* (1991). ***"He's a great bloke and one of the world's greatest cinematographers. The respect Semler has in America alone is amazing. He is still the same bloke he was fifty years ago when we were working together at the ABC in Sydney. Semler was filming This Day Tonight while I was on Four Corners."*** The two old friends decided the time was right to film a documentary on Semler, and so Brill filmed and directed the journey as Semler travelled from his home in Los Angeles to his childhood town of Renmark, South Australia.

But it has always been the humanitarian stories that have drawn Brill's attention. Working at SBS *Dateline* as a video journalist and travelling the world with a MiniDV camera, ***"Filming unsung heroes, for those without a voice in a very dignified way,"*** he says. ***"It's been my experience that what we find among all this misery is dignity and hope. Hope that you can make a difference."***

"My filmmaking is very raw," explains Brill. ***"I am a proud cinematographer. My pictures are not always glamorous but they come from my heart. If somebody in my frame turns the camera turns with them and if they look that way my camera will look that way. It is observational film making. My camera is always going from hand held to the tripod and hand held again as needed. It is knowing when to use the tripod. Filmmaking on the run."***

Brill has never stopped having his eye behind the lens, most recently for our Society as he filmed the story of ACS Honorary Member Dorothy Hallam at her home in southern Tasmania. Hallam filmed as a freelance news cinematographer from 1961 for ABC Television in Tasmania. Storytelling a variety of news stories from her Peninsula across two decades. Hallam is the first female cinematographer filming for ABC Australia and she spoke to Brill after he travelled over the Apple Isle to the Peninsula to film the story of the now 96-year-old cinematographer. We'll be covering this amazing story in the next issue of Australian Cinematographer Magazine.

"It is a tremendous privilege how the doors open up to you as a cinematographer. You do not take it for granted that people let you in to their lives and you must treat them with great respect," says Brill. ***"To me it's the story that matters with good camerawork, the camera is an extension of my heart, my soul and my eye."***

It has been a privilege to bring you part of the story of David Brill and I will leave you with these final words. ***"I don't say it's a calling, but it's a responsibility. I feel if it is filmed properly and with dignity to show what is going on in the world. As a storyteller, cinematographer, video journalist, it's wonderful bringing these stories back home and showing it to the audience so they hopefully will understand what is happening in the world."***

Thanks for the pictures, mate.

Kevin Hudson ACS has worked as a cinematographer shooting news, current affairs and lifestyle programs for the Seven Network for almost thirty years. He earned a Gold Tripod in 2018 for his work on '*Ember Storm*'.

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