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"A GREAT OR LITTLE THING"
HENK VAN EEGHEN, EDITOR

THE WHITE LOTUS

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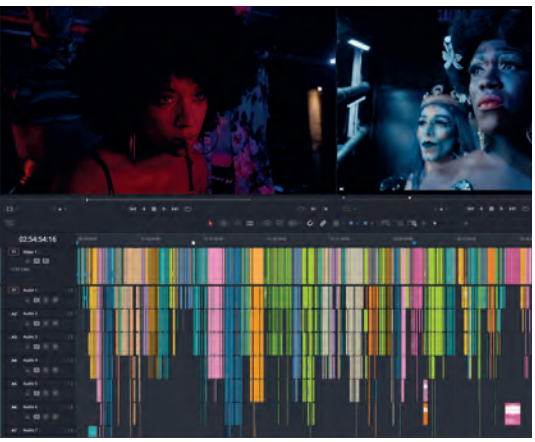
RAINS OVER BABEL

SUNDANCE NEXT PREMIERE "RAINS OVER BABEL" BRINGS PURGATORY TO LIFE

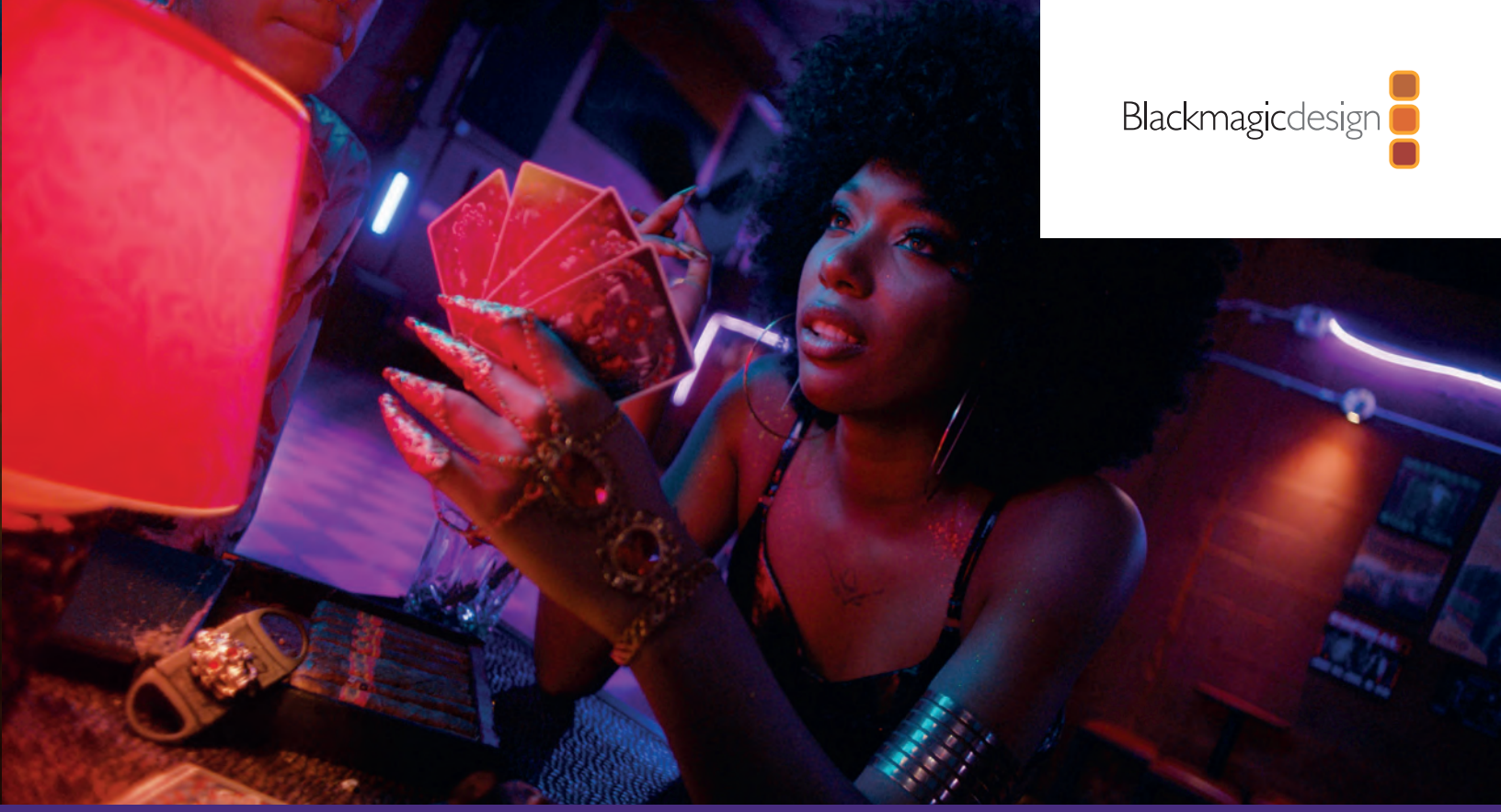


The Sundance Film Festival's NEXT category spotlights innovative, bold and forwarding-thinking films and is home to a wide range of diverse projects that will shape global cinema in years to come. Described as a tropical Colombian steampunk fever-dream and filled to the brim with lively music and queer joy, the feature film "Rains Over Babel" premiered in the NEXT category at the 2025 festival, enamoring audiences with its colorful and mesmerizing world.

A debut from Spanish Colombian writer/director Gala del Sol, the film tells the story of the city's Grim Reaper, La Flaca, who presides over Babel, a legendary dive bar that doubles as purgatory. Inside, a group of misfits converges, gambling years of their lives with La Flaca, daring to outwit Death herself. The fantastical world and vibrant characters in "Rains Over Babel" were brought to life in post by del Sol, who also served as co-editor, and Hadley Hillel, along with Assistant Editors Jose Varón and Felipe Aguilar, and Colorist Elliott Powell.

"Hadley and I began by editing each scene separately in DaVinci Resolve Studio, starting with individual timelines for every scene. Later, we combined these into sequences to refine timing, rhythm, and structure. We used speed ramps to finetune the rhythm of certain cuts and enhance the energy in action sequences. Resolve's stabilization tools were fantastic, helping to smooth out some challenging shots," noted del Sol.

"My favorite, and the most challenging sequence, was the climactic fight. It involved a montage of two fights happening in different times and locations, with the cuts matching movement. Resolve allowed us to easily experiment with rhythm and flow until we achieved a seamless, kinetic montage," del Sol added. "Outside of the edit page, we used Fusion for keying out green



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“I LOVE WORKING WITH RESOLVE BECAUSE IT SIMPLIFIES **THE WORKFLOW BETWEEN EDITING, COLORING, AND FINALIZING.**”

screens, working with titles, and creating the final animated sequence. The cut out animations for the credits were also done entirely within Resolve.”

According to del Sol, the goal during grading was to create a retro futuristic, tropical punk aesthetic, with Powell working his magic to bring this vision to life. Using DP Sten Olsen’s show LUT as a starting point, Powell created subtleties by adding color density, texture, light grain, halation and glow.

“The very first scene of the movie was one that developed the most,” Powell explained. “I cooled it down a fair bit to make the blue walls pop, and the scene’s wide shots, showcasing all different lamps and windows, really made the textural elements that I added shine.”

Powell also relied heavily on DaVinci Resolve Studio’s ColorTrace tool, which allowed him to quickly copy grades from one timeline to another based on the source timecode of each clip.

“With Gala editing in Colombia while I was in NYC, she used Resolve’s media management to get everything down to less than a terabyte using trimmed files, and then she sent me a hard drive and a DaVinci Resolve Timeline file (DRT), which made the conform minimal. I reconformed from bins to the new trimmed clips, and then it was smooth sailing,” Powell said. “If there were some changes, she sent a new DRT and some more trimmed files, and I used the same process and then ColorTraced the color from the old DRT to the new one.”

Del Sol added: “Given that Hadley and I were working long distance between Colombia and Los Angeles, while Elliott was in New York, being able to seamlessly exchange Resolve timelines saved us an incredible amount of time and ensured accuracy.” “I love working with Resolve because it simplifies the workflow between editing, coloring, and finalizing. In past projects, transferring between different software for color grading introduced challenges like dropped frames, misaligned shots, or lost adjustments, including zooms, speed changes, and stabilization. For ‘Rains Over Babel,’ Resolve eliminated those issues entirely,” noted del Sol.

“I started using Resolve in college, and I took a class taught by Tashi Trieu, an acclaimed colorist whose work includes ‘Avatar,’” she continued. “Although Elliott helped me with a lot of my class projects back then, I quickly fell in love with Resolve’s intuitive workflow and how everything I needed was integrated into one software.”

Del Sol concluded: “I loved collaborating once again with my college friends, Hadley and Elliott, on this project. They’ve been integral to every short film I’ve worked on since sophomore year, and it was incredible to have their talent, patience, and sharp creative instincts by my side for my first feature. Their unwavering support made all the difference.”

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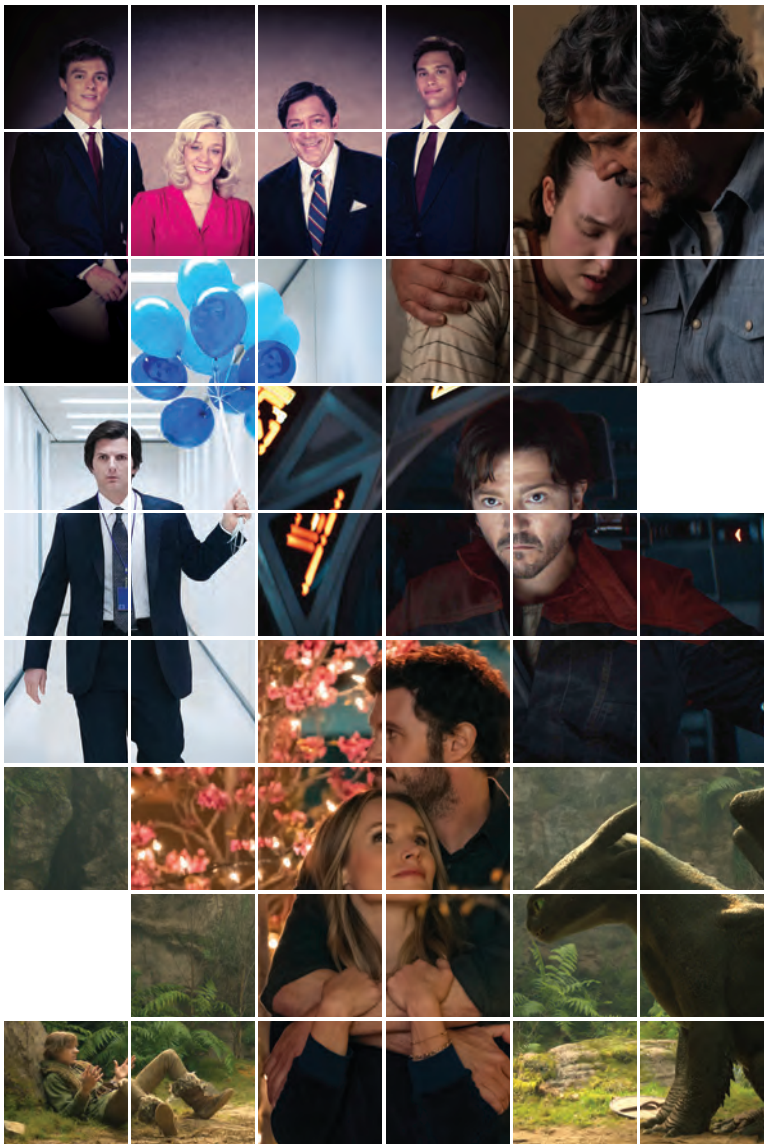

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Hello, fellow editors and editing fans around the globe. As the summer sun rises high, so too does our sense of community within ACE. I am so proud of all the work our organization has been doing to foster support for one another during this tumultuous time.

One of the most meaningful developments this year has been the launch of our Connect-Support Committee. Born out of a need to connect and reflect not just on the work we do, but to stand beside each other in the ever-evolving industry. The committee is growing into a vital support system offering weekly sessions in the Summer of Support Sundays series. Whether you're just starting out as an assistant or a seasoned editor, Connect-Support is here to offer mentorship, emotional support and a real sense of belonging. We also hope to share future articles featuring personal stories of hardships – accounts of members from our own community who have endured trauma yet continue to be resilient and fight on. These stories will serve to inspire and remind us that we are not going through this alone.

This spirit of unity was on full display at our recent Connect Committee Luncheon, which for the first time was held in New York. This quarterly ACE event brings one retired editor together with a small group of active ACE members where stories can be shared, wisdom exchanged and friendships sparked. It is a reminder that our profession is not just about the cut – it's about who we become along the way, and who we have beside us on that journey.

I am genuinely inspired by the incredible momentum within ACE and the remarkable achievements of all of our committees. I personally want to thank our committee chairs and all the members who've stepped up to participate – your dedication is making ACE more vibrant, relevant and, yes, a whole lot more fun. You're helping shape not just what our organization is today, but what it's becoming. Your work truly makes a difference.

And of course, it wouldn't be summer without Emmy FYC season. I hope you've had the opportunity to watch some amazing programming and to celebrate the remarkable work of our fellow editors. We'll be highlighting some great shows in the issue. Please read about *Nobody Wants This*, *Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story*, *The Last of Us*, *Severance* and *Andor*. Just remember, behind every powerful performance or unforgettable moment is an editor shaping the story with precision and heart.

And of course, it isn't summer without going to the movie theater to get out of the heat! Going to the movies isn't just about nostalgia – it's about sustaining that experience, and the industry that depends on it, alive. The communal experience of watching a film on the big screen, surrounded by an audience, is still one of the most powerful ways to connect with storytelling. As feature editors, our work is meant to be seen, heard and felt in that immersive environment. In this issue, you can read more about one of this summer's big theatrical hits, *How to Train Your Dragon*, edited by my talented friend, Wyatt Smith, ACE.

We're also looking ahead with great anticipation to EditFest, one of ACE's most beloved annual events. Whether in-person on Aug. 23 or streaming from afar on Oct. 4, EditFest is always a chance to be inspired, re-energized, and reminded of why we fell in love with this art form in the first place. If you haven't attended before, make this the year you join us. You'll find connection, community and no shortage of editing wisdom.

As we move through summer, let's keep our heads cool in this topsy-turvy world. Let's lean on each other. Let's celebrate not just the work, but the sense of community we've built along the way. Continue to share stories. Share knowledge. Remember to be kind. Be respectful. And cut, cut, cut! CE

– SABRINA PLISCO, ACE, President

Photo by Peter Zakhary.

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CONTRIBUTORS

Matt Allen is the recipient of the Eric Zumbrunnen Fellowship (2020-2021). In late 2022, he finished editing the feature film entitled *American Murderer* starring Tom Pelphrey, Ryan Phillippe, Idina Menzel and Jacki Weaver. His feature film assistant editor credits include *A Man Called Otto*, *Christopher Robin* from Disney, *Bloodshot* and *Sweet Girl*. As an associate member of ACE, he always enjoys working with and being mentored by other ACE members! He hopes to work with another ACE member on a film very soon!

Carolyn Giardina is an award-winning journalist and author who has devoted her career to covering the art and science of entertainment. This has included editor and/or reporter roles at *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Variety* and *SHOOT*. She has covered editing throughout her career and in 2015 received ACE's prestigious Robert Wise Award for journalistic contributions to film editing. She's also a lecturer at Chapman University's Dodge College of Film & Media Arts.

Sheri Linden reviews films for *The New York Times* and *The Hollywood Reporter*. Previously she served as reviews editor at *Variety*, and, as a longtime film critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, produced a series on vintage films for the Sunday Calendar section. Her writing has also been published by the Reuters news service, *Boxoffice*, *Art & Antiques*, and the *Chicago Tribune*, and she was a contributor to the TCM book *Leading Men: The 50 Most Unforgettable Actors of the Studio Era*. In June 2024 she was awarded the Los Angeles Press Club's inaugural prize in the category of film criticism under 1,000 words.

Harry B. Miller III, ACE, is a feature, television and documentary editor. His recent credits include *Turn: Washington's Spies* and *The Predator*.

Adrian Pennington is a journalist, editor and marketing copywriter whose articles have appeared in the *Financial Times*, *British Cinematographer*, *Screen International*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Premiere*, *Broadcast*, *RTS Television* and *The Guardian*. He is co-author of *Exploring 3D: The New Grammar of Stereoscopic Filmmaking* (Focal Press, 2012) and his favorite film of all time is *Gilda*.

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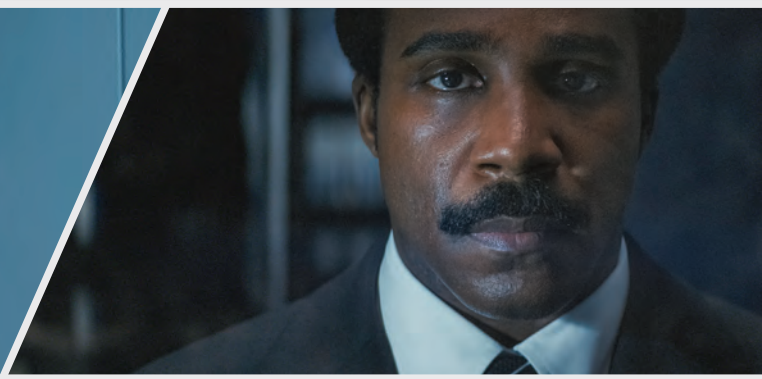

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CONNECT COMMITTEE LUNCHEON (WEST COAST)

ACE past president Alan Heim, ACE, was the Life Member honoree at a May 21 luncheon held at Marino Ristorante in Los Angeles. Attendees including Angela Catanzaro ACE, Emily Hsuan ACE, Dan Rovetto, ACE, and Barry O'Brien, ACE, also celebrated Heim's birthday during the Pacific Post-hosted lunch.

Alan spoke about the high points – and occasional hurdles – of his decades-long journey in film. With a resume that includes *Network*, *Star 80*, *Lenny*, *American History X*, *The Notebook* and his Oscar-winning *All That Jazz*, Alan was refreshingly honest about both the successes and the challenges he's faced along the way.

Naturally, Bob Fosse was a central figure in the conversation. Alan collaborated with Fosse on four films over 15 years – a partnership he called the most valuable of his career. He spoke of Fosse with admiration, not only for his creative genius but for the way he treated his crew. "He always acknowledged people," Alan said. "He cared about everyone." Fosse referred to Alan as a collaborator, and it was clear their dynamic was rooted in mutual respect. During the editing of *Star 80*, Fosse once approached Alan with a scene idea. After cutting it together, Fosse asked, "Do you like it?" When Alan said he did, Fosse grinned and replied, "You should – it was your idea four months ago."

Alan's career has spanned some of the most iconic films in the business, and having the chance to hear him share his experiences directly was a privilege. What stood out was not just the work itself, but the straightforward and sincere way he's been navigating the ups and downs of his career. CE

– JONATHAN ALBERTS, ACE

CONNECT COMMITTEE LUNCHEON (EAST COAST)

The ACE Connect Committee held its first East Coast luncheon for Harry Keramidas, ACE, on May 8 at the historic Dowling's at The Carlyle restaurant in New York. Host members Erica Freed, ACE, and Kate Sanford, ACE, were joined by Harry's wife, Renee, who happened to be celebrating her birthday, along with Joseph Krings, ACE, and Simeon Hutner, ACE. Harry was very animated and open with the group, describing his early years in the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic, which sparked an interest in ethnographic films, and then as a mentee of Verna Fields, ACE, while attending grad school at USC. He discovered his talent for filmmaking and editing while on the job, working as an editor for the Office of Economic Opportunity and others, editing more than 70 documentaries and educational films.

Harry transitioned to sound editor on *New York, New York* and then moved to picture, bypassing the rigid studio roster system. His career highlights include all three *Back to the Future* films, co-edited with his close friend and colleague Arthur Schmidt; *Judge Dredd*, *About Last Night*, the *Tales from the Crypt* series and *Contact.* Harry recounted the historic decision to scrap months of work on the first *Back to the Future* movie and recast the lead with Michael J. Fox. His collaboration with filmmaker Robert Zemeckis lasted several decades and he describes the director as the sharpest he's ever known.

Harry is enjoying retirement in Western Massachusetts. He started and now chairs the Ashfield FilmFest, which promotes short films made in or about the community. He also travels to New York for dinners and shows.

Thank you to Pacific Post for making these incredible luncheons possible. CE – KATE SANFORD, ACE

West Coast luncheon photo courtesy of Jonathan Alberts, ACE.
East Coast photo courtesy of Joesph Krings, ACE; Kate Sanford, ACE; Erica Freed, ACE.

2025'S ERIC ZUMBRUNNEN FELLOW

This year's recipient of the Eric Zumbrunnen Fellowship is Seamus O'Malley Finnegan. An alumni of WashU, St. Louis and graduate of USC's School of Cinematic Arts, Finnegan is currently a color assistant at Company 3 working on shows including *The Last of Us* and *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*.

As he pursues a career in post-production with the support of the Fellowship, Finnegan says he believes that his life is "a non-stop roller coaster of opportunities and experiences" that began with the VHS box sets of *Star Wars*, *Indiana Jones* and *Lord of the Rings* from his youth in San Francisco. He hopes to work on stories that are uplifting, diverse and adventurous in their artistic ambitions and to help those around him in the same way that he's been helped on his journey.

The Fellowship is named after Eric Zumbrunnen, ACE, (*Being John Malkovich*) who co-founded post-production company EXILE before his death from cancer in 2017. The award harnesses the goodwill of ACE, Adobe, Avid, Pix, Media Arts Lab and Eric's friends and colleagues to provide the Fellow with the latest tools, hands-on opportunities and the wisdom of many of the talented and experienced professionals Eric worked with.

2025'S SALLY MENKE FELLOW

Arielle Zakowski has been awarded the Sally Menke Memorial Editing Fellowship. Zakowski is a Los Angeles-based editor whose most recent movie, Sean Wang's *Didi*, won the U.S. Dramatic Audience Award at its Sundance Film Festival premiere and was released theatrically to critical acclaim. The movie received four Independent Spirit Award nominations including best editing. Her previous film, Sony Pictures' screen-life thriller *Missing*, earned nearly $50 million at the box office. Zakowski also has experience in documentaries, having edited Dan Chen's Emmy-nominated feature doc *Accepted* and David Gelb's *Wolfgang* for Disney, both of which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival. She has also edited episodes of Netflix shows: *Chef's Table*, *Making a Murderer* and *Trial by Media*. Earlier, she spent a decade in the ad world.

Menke was a mentor to Sundance Institute filmmakers and editors, and is known for films including *Reservoir Dogs*, *Pulp Fiction*, *Jackie Brown*, *All the Pretty Horses*, *Kill Bill* and *Inglourious Basterds*. In memory of her artistry and love of mentoring, Sundance Institute created the Fellowship to support an emerging narrative editor in furthering their understanding of craft in the independent film space, expanding their artistic community and providing momentum to their editing career.

Seamus O'Malley Finnegan photo courtesy of Finnegan; Arielle Zakowski photo by Dan Chen.

ACE ANNUAL MEETING

The ACE Annual Meeting was held June 14 before 400 members, in person at The Garland in North Hollywood, while many more watched the proceedings online.

ACE president Sabrina Plisco, ACE, began the meeting by acknowledging the significant challenges faced by the community, from the production downturn to, most recently, the L.A. wildfires. "It's been a lot to digest as we've been trying to survive all of these hurdles on top of life's normal hardships. We've seen productions stall, opportunities diminish and many creative voices fall silent due to circumstances beyond their control," she said.

"The one thing I want to encourage is for you to talk about your own hardships. No one is going through this alone," she continued. "This era may seem daunting to overcome, but I think we should remain hopeful. After all, we are storytellers – resilient and visionary. Now, more than ever, unity and mutual support are essential. We need to stand together and be there for one another, knowing that we are stronger and better when we are connected."

With that, she provided an overview of the newly formed Connect-Support Committee, aimed at helping members navigate difficult times through fostering connections and providing support (see story, page 17).

ACE is also continuing to raise funds through its Educational Center to help finance programs to foster help and support for the community.

Plisco also reported on committee work including that of the newly formed New York Committee, which is "off the charts with their sold out screenings." And she noted that this is the second year of the expanded Internship Program, which now takes place in Los Angeles, New York and London. This year's L.A. interns, Kakhi Maxwell and Annabelle Toe, were recognized during the meeting.

Looking ahead, EditFest will be held in person on Aug. 23 at Disney's Historic Grand Central Air Terminal in Glendale, followed by EditFest Global, a virtual event on Oct. 4.

New ACE members and affiliate members were recognized during the proceedings. Since last year's annual meeting, a whopping 104 new active and affiliate members joined ACE, while five International Partner Members have been brought in by the International Committee.

Plisco also acknowledged the staff, committee chairs and members, board and volunteers for their support of ACE. And, she offered special thanks to meeting sponsor Adobe for its generosity.

Photos by Peter Zakhary.

ACE ANNUAL MEETING

Photos by Peter Zakhary.

LIFE LESSONS

The Life Lessons column was created for veteran ACE life members to share their personal musings, views and recollections about their experiences in our business. This quarter's column is written by Alan Heim, ACE, an ACE past president.

After many years of working in New York as a sound editor on television shows, I was asked to be the co-sound editor on Sidney Lumet's *The Pawnbroker.* It was my first emotionally grueling job, an unrelenting trip into the mind of a Holocaust survivor. I never met Sidney on that project, but I later did at one screening of *The Group*, my next sound project for him. He didn't come to the final mix because he was in England directing *The Hill*, but the producer showed up, asking me to make picture changes. I contacted Sidney at once – he put *The Hill* on pause, returned to NYC and retook control of his film.

Afterward, I continued doing sound and music for various projects until I found myself working with Sidney again, this time on *Bye Bye Braverman*, a comedy that deserved better than its reviews, when he asked me if I would like to edit the picture on his next film. I had been planning on exploring ways to become a picture editor and I jumped at the offer. Cut to several months later and, after a trip to Sweden and return to NYC to edit the film, I was flying to California for the final mix of *The Sea Gull*, Sidney's version of Chekhov's classic play.

I had never been to Los Angeles and, as we drove from LAX to The Beverly Hills Hotel, I marveled at the colored lights lighting the palm trees and lawns of, what seemed to me, palatial homes. I settled into to my room, perhaps the smallest in the hotel, and fell asleep. In the morning, I explored the patio, a tiny patch of grass with a very high wall. I popped my head over it and, feeling like "Kilroy Was Here," I got my first daytime view of smoggy mountains to the east.

When I returned to the hotel after the first day of mixing, the desk clerk called out, "Mr. Bogarde, Mr. Bogarde." Since I was the only person in the lobby, I quickly pointed out that I looked nothing like Dirk Bogarde and continued to my room. I later had dinner with Sidney, Yves Montand and James Mason followed by drinks at the Polo Lounge, where, to satisfy the dress code, James Mason made a necktie for me out of his belt so that I could be admitted.

We mixed for three days with Buzz Knudson and two other mixers on a palatial stage with iron railings around the raised console, which made it seem like a porch in the outer boroughs of NYC. I also couldn't figure out why we needed a music mixer when we only had one piece of music, a practical piano in the opening scene. I was used to our New York style of one mixer on a small stage. Nonetheless we finished and Sidney and I went to the airport the next morning to return to the city we were both happier in.

That's where I got my first real lesson in feature filmmaking. Sidney and I were walking in the terminal waiting for our flight to be called when we were joined by a man who Sidney, after an extremely warm hug, introduced as Ray Stark, the producer of *Funny Girl*, Sidney telling him that I was an "up-and-coming" young editor. I was about 32 at the time and flattered by the description.

We exchanged pleasantries with the famous producer and went our separate ways. When Stark was gone, Sidney threw his arm over my shoulder and said, "I'm suing that son of a bitch for a half million dollars."

That was the moment that I realized I "wasn't in Kansas anymore" and was now in the world of serious filmmaking. CE

EDITFEST LA 2025

ACE is preparing for upcoming EditFest in LA, a day of networking and valuable training for editors at every stage of their career. The event will feature a masterclass from Pamela Martin, ACE, the Eddie-winning and Academy Award-nominated editor known for her work on films such as *King Richard*, *The Fighter*, *Little Miss Sunshine* and *Battle of the Sexes.* She will share her deep insight into the art and discipline of film editing in conversation with author Bobbie O'Steen.

Additionally, there will be a section of the program devoted to AI, which will examine the practical uses of the growing number of AI tools in current editing workflows along with discussion about automation, creativity and ethics. Panelists will share firsthand experiences of their use of AI in the cutting room.

EditFest Connect LA won't shy away from the toughest topics in our industry. You will find advice, information and guidance from leading editors on subjects including how to find the next job and build new relationships in a challenging job market. How do you cope with being replaced on a project – or replacing others? (clue, it's about maintaining mutual respect). There will be advice for freelancers on financial planning and also about how to manage and preserve the work/life balance that suits you.

Also at EditFest, there will be a moderated discussion of the challenges and techniques that come into play when editing across genres. Plus, Blackmagic Design, our Platinum Sponsor, will be on hand to deliver demonstrations and insights into DaVinci Resolve tools.

This in-person event is being held on Aug. 23 at Disney's Grand Central Air Terminal and tickets are on sale now.

Please also note, there will be an additional Virtual EditFest on Oct. 4 – look out for details! CE

ACE INTRODUCES CONNECT-SUPPORT COMMITTEE

It is long overdue that ACE recognizes life isn't always picture perfect and that many members have suffered loss and tragedy, especially in recent years during which we have endured the pandemic, strikes, a production slowdown and most recently the L.A. wildfires. ACE does care, and wants to attempt to help.

With this in mind, ACE formed a new ACE Connect-Support Committee, chaired by Jim May, ACE, Sharidan Sotelo, ACE, and Stephanie Filo, ACE. The trio thanked ACE president Sabrina Plisco, ACE, and ACE executive director Jenni McCormick for giving birth to the idea for the committee and allowing it to grow.

"The Connect-Support Committee was formed as a method of support in response to the wildfires, strikes, pandemics and industry decimation, working with both the ACE organization and the editing community as a whole," according to the chairs. "This committee is about members helping members with resources and volunteerism that give us a strong sense of community. We are providing outlets to work on areas of mental reserve and mindful resilience as we brave these uncharted times. If we help just one person, we are doing the job, but we hope that the help will be widespread."

The committee's initiative kicked off with Summer of Support Sundays, beginning with an online session on "resetting the nervous system" with Carolyn Barnes, a clinical hypnotherapist and nationally recognized wellness expert. She offered coaching on how to navigate mental burnout and emotional overload, fear-based overthinking, creative paralysis and disconnection from confidence, with guidance on how to rewire your nervous system for calm and clarity, release stored emotional block, increase self confidence and restore balance and energy.

Next, fellow editor Debby Germino led an in-person grief ritual – a guided practice to release stagnant energy using sound, movement and words.

Summer sessions also included art therapy, meditation, yoga and a sound bath. Members and their guests are welcome to attend these sessions. Members also have access to select materials and recorded sessions. CE

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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Holding hands photo © Yuri Arcurs Productions.

TECH CORNER

Fast, Cheap *and* Good: Working with DaVinci Resolve

BY HARRY B. MILLER III, ACE

"Fast, cheap, and good … pick two."
– Jim Jarmusch to Tom Waits

"I think I paid $300 bucks like seven or eight years ago for version 15. And that's the last time I gave them any money," editor Brian Chandler said, explaining to me how he started with the paid version of DaVinci Resolve Studio, the NLE from Blackmagic Design (BMD). He's been getting free updates since.

DaVinci Resolve is mostly known as the primary platform for television and feature color correction. Color is only one of its seven Pages, or contained applications. It also has fully functional Edit, Fusion (VFX), Fairlight (sound editing/mixing) and Deliver (output). Media and Cut are the other two Pages.

Another common and handy use for Resolve is transcoding media from one video format to another, for example taking camera original ProRes files and converting/syncing them for a different NLE. A long time ago I took over a Final Cut 7 project. Wanting to convert the media for Media Composer, I downloaded the free version of Resolve and transcoded all the media to the .mxf format. (The free and paid versions of Resolve are nearly identical. The paid version, called Studio, has AI features and more advanced image handling).

Brian is leading a post-production team which is taking stock and public domain footage to create short videos that are designed to play on a new app called TrueShort. It is a true crime series. Think something like Quibi … minus a few billion dollars. This show's EP was interested in using Resolve, which Brian was familiar with from doing color correction, so it became their post platform. "There [were] a handful of features (in the new version 20) that just seemed perfect for what we were looking at doing. So, my feeling was as long as we're breaking new territory, let's break new territory."

Editor Brian Chandler

The editors will create longer episodes of 10 to 20 minutes and slice them up into one minute 'chapters' for the app. Normally a Media Composer editor, Brian feels this job allows him an excellent excuse to learn a new NLE, and a new type of show.

This show has three editors and one assistant. Their common network is Blackmagic Cloud, which currently is storing about 75GB for the project. As the lead editor and finisher, Brian takes the high-resolution original media and transcodes it to smaller proxy files. The proxy files are automatically uploaded to the Cloud, then automatically downloaded to the teams' workstations.

Blackmagic smartly has a separate application for creating proxies. This allows the editor to keep working in Resolve, while the BMD Proxy Generator operates. It's a well designed system, where the proxies are placed in a subfolder of where the media files reside.

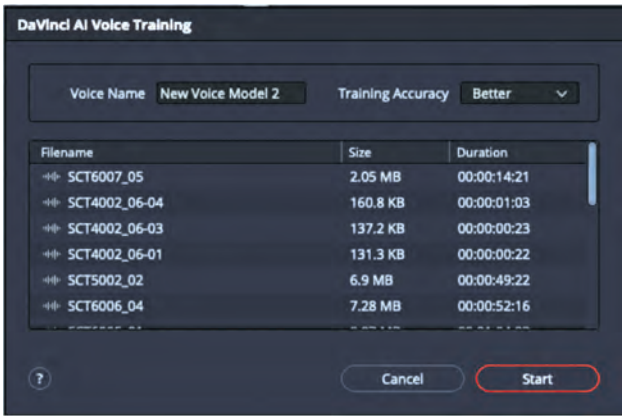
BMD Cloud is not, however, working with Super Bins. This could be a software bug, or the team simply hasn't found out how to make them work. Brian wanted to create common bins for music, sound effects, etc., which everyone could draw from, but found that BMD Cloud wasn't keeping the bins in sync as needed.

The latest version of Resolve 20 was demonstrated at the recent Las Vegas NAB Show. What was special about this release were several artificial intelligence features that had been added. (Isn't AI the latest infection that everything seems to have?)

Maybe the most intriguing and useful new feature is called Voice Convert. You can select a clip of dialogue and convert the sound to a preset male/female voice. Or you can train Resolve on an actor's voice to make a sound-alike. The program does warn you to obtain proper permission to do so.

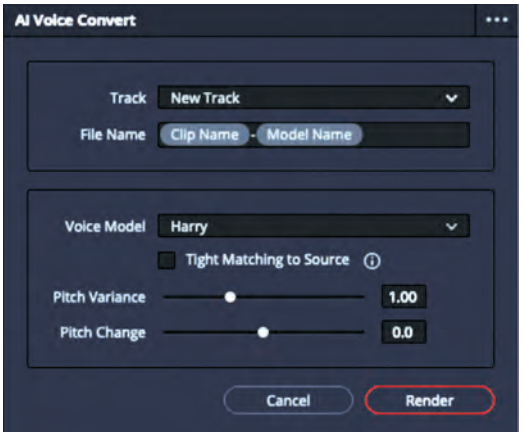
Photos and screenshots courtesy of Harry B. Miller III, ACE.

Here, I've selected several clips of my voice reading temp ADR lines. Resolve can take these recordings and create a model of my voice. In the next step …



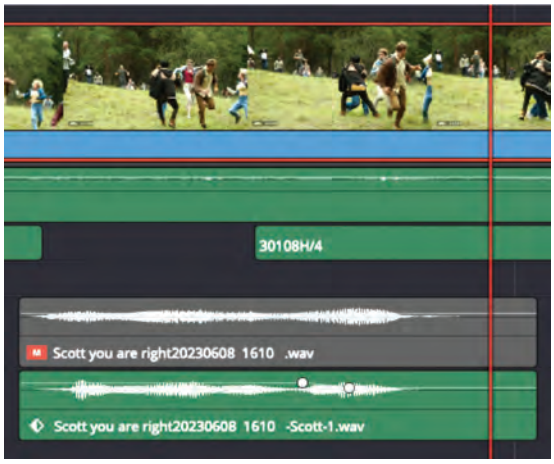
Temp ADR Clips / AI Voice Training Panel

… select an audio clip in a timeline. I can convert that voice to sound like the generic female or male, or to sound like me, based on my voice model. I replaced the dialogue in a sequence of one actor with my voice. And it was scary good.



Voice Convert Panel

As shown here, the selected clip was converted (and muted), while the new clip is added to the timeline.



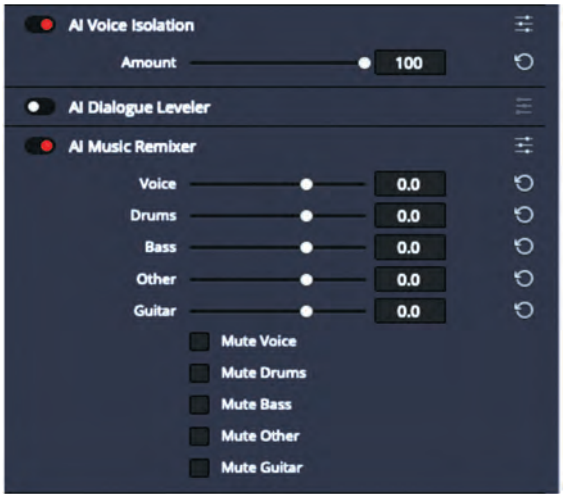
Timeline with new and converted clips

I've worked on shows that have so much temp ADR, which I always record myself (faster/easier), that in some cases everyone talking in a scene sounds like me. Including the women. At least with this, it could be me sounding like a female.

"I hate the sound of my voice," says Brian. "Which makes the price of Resolve worth it" for creating temp dialogue.

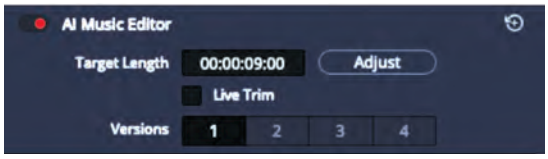
Other useful AI audio tools are AI Voice Isolation, which, well, isolates dialogue. Brian is often getting clips that have mixed music and sound effects, which can be removed to just hear the dialogue.

And AI Music Remixer. This tool is amazing. You can rebalance a selected music track by instrument Or, eliminate certain instruments completely. The song with vocals in your edit can be turned into an instrumental.



AI Voice Isolation Panel

Also, there is AI Music Editor: Select a clip, then input the length you'd like that music to be. Longer or shorter. The pitch isn't changed, and music sections are added or subtracted to sound unedited. This is more successful with score than with songs.



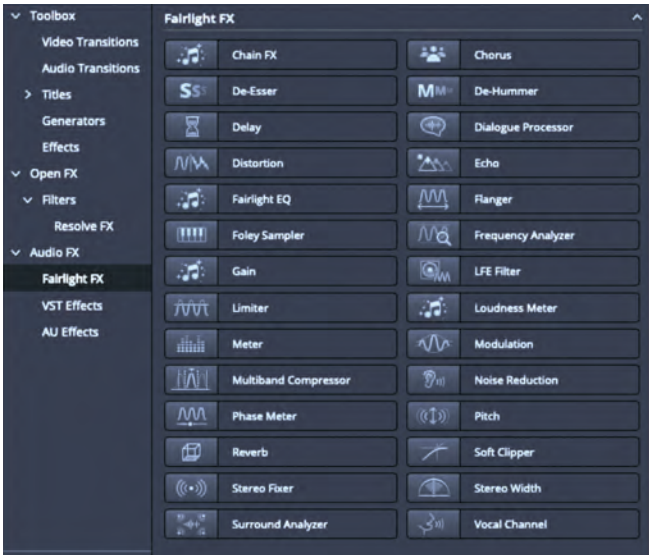
AI Music Editor Panel

Transcriptions are another AI tool. As with other NLEs, you select a clip and have it transcribed (Media Composer transcribes audio automatically). Once transcribed, highlighted text can be cut into the timeline.

My least successful AI test was with Create New Timeline Using IntelliScript. Basically, you point Resolve to the clips for a scene, then to a text file that contains the dialogue you want to assemble. IntelliScript assembles a sequence following the scripted text. I pulled up dailies from a past scripted project, which had several angles of coverage, including A and B cameras. IntelliScript may work well for interview footage. But this assembly was a disaster. Lines off camera, 8 frame cuts, a jumbled mess. It was so … reassuring.

But the real story of Resolve is its basic functionality. It starts up and loads a project with remarkable speed. It may slow up with increased project size, but that test will have to wait for another day. The Edit page is easy and quick to work on. The Edit workspace isn't nearly as configurable as Media Composer or Premiere, as all the pieces are locked together in one window. Unless you choose "Dual Screen On," and half of the pieces (Media Pool, Audio Mixer, Effects) break off onto a second screen, making the primary display items (Source, Record, Timeline) much larger. And a project automatically saves so quickly, it is barely noticeable.

Resolve comes with a large number of audio and video effects. Plus, several basic and animated title templates. The most interesting audio effect is the Chain FX. This allows you to add up to six audio effects into one Chain FX, which can be saved for reuse as a Favorite. Finally, it hasn't crashed during any of my testing.



Audio & Video FX Panel

One unfortunate downside of Resolve is there doesn't seem to be a way to save different timeline views. In Media Composer and Premiere, you can arrange tracks, size them, turn on/off waveforms, etc. and save it into a track layout. Saved presets for dialogue, music and sound effects is very useful. Then again, it might be I just haven't found that yet. After all, the manual for Resolve is ***four thousand pages long*** … 4032 to be exact. I'm happy to read documentation, but for this one, life is too short.

So how does one learn Resolve? Rather than read the manual, there are many, many YouTube instructional videos available. Several from Blackmagic, and several more from independent instructors. According to Brian, Casey Faris (@CaseyFaris) is a very good source. Very good instruction sources also include Write & Direct (@writedirect), Creative Video Tips (creativevideotips.com) and Team 2 Films (team2films.com). Still, imagine learning Media Composer, Pro Tools, After Effects and Media Encoder … all at the same time.

Which brings up a disadvantage to working with Resolve. As our NLEs become more advanced, where we can do more VFX, sound and color work, the expectations for a more advanced edit rise. I have gotten reasonably familiar with the Edit page, and the Media page for ingesting video/audio. I'm working on the Fairlight page. But I haven't even started the Fusion page, which has a reputation for being complicated. There is just so much to learn to competently work on any of these pages. Blackmagic's original idea is probably that four different workstations could easily collaborate on one project, but it is likely producers (and editors) would see Resolve as all within the editors' purview.

Asked what he would choose for his next project, Brian said it would depend on the project's workflow. For a scripted narrative, it would be Media Composer. "Only because I know how far the workflow has really been tried. Whereas with Resolve, it's all being figured out. When something goes wrong, how do you fix it?"

Hmm. Go to YouTube? CE

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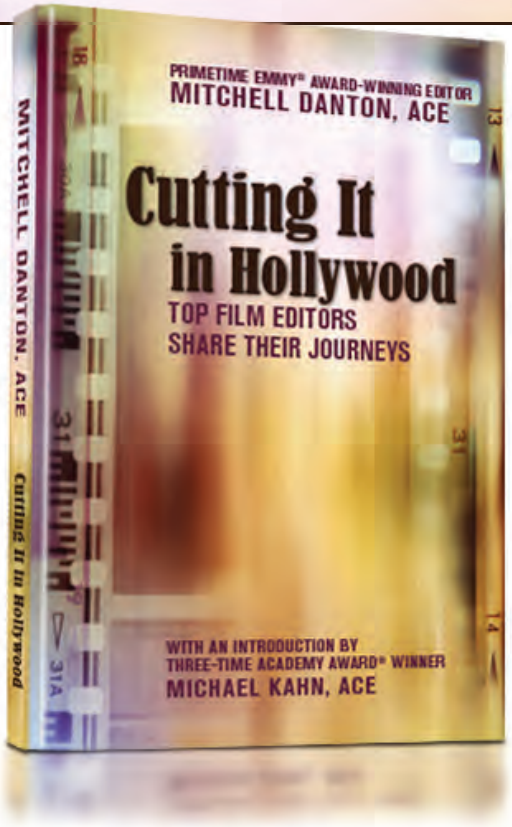

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INTRODUCTION BY THREE-TIME ACADEMY AWARD® WINNER
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ANDOR

Editor and executive producer John Gilroy, ACE, on how *Andor* successfully docked into the *Star Wars* timeline

BY MATT ALLEN

The second season of Disney's *Star Wars* thriller *Andor* fulfills its destiny by docking into the start of 2016 feature *Rogue One*, itself a prequel that plugged into the original 1977 *Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope* timeline. Co-pilot to Gareth Edwards on *Rogue One* and both series of *Andor* is John Gilroy, ACE, whose brother Tony co-wrote the former and is showrunner of the latter. At one point intended as a multi-season show with each season covering one year of the five years before the start of the events in *Rogue One*, Disney compressed that schedule for S2. This final run of *Andor* concertinas four years of story into 12 episodes edited by the team of Gilroy, Yan Miles, ACE, and Matthew Cannings in delivering coherence and propulsion over multiple character arcs and intergalactic worlds. *CinemaEditor* caught up with Gilroy.

CinemaEditor: **How did your career start in editing feature films and TV? Is editing something you always wanted to do?**

John Gilroy, ACE: It wasn't something that I always wanted to do. My father [Frank Gilroy] is in the entertainment business and when I was in college I was actually thinking that I would go the opposite way. Maybe I'd be a lawyer or anything but the entertainment business. I don't think I chose editing as much as it chose me. I wanted to be a director. Some of my great hero directors had started as editors, Robert Wise, Hal Ashby and David Lean. I kind of stumbled into editing, and at first it was not a perfect fit. I was a dyslexic frat boy. I had never handled film and never been to film school, so my first job was a little dicey. It was a movie called *The Goodbye People* and I was just a terrible apprentice I must say. After that job though, I got the hang of it and I got hired on a lot of shows as a picture assistant and sound assistant. I worked my way up the ladder. That assistant experience taught me how to run a cutting room and how to build a show. All that knowledge has to become second nature before you actually become a successful editor.

CE: **What made you want to pursue a career in editing? Any early formative experiences?**

JG: I think you learn the most when you're thrown into the deep end and manage to survive. My first feature was for my father and I was not supposed to edit that movie. It was called *The Luckiest Man in the World* and I was a producer on the film. With the stock market crash of 1987, we lost half of our financing a week into the shoot. Very painful. I became the editor by default. He couldn't afford anybody else. I was thrown into cutting that feature because he needed me to. It was a modest movie, and it was held together by spit and glue because of our lack of funds, but the personal headline for me was that I realized I could really edit. My dad realized it too. It was a revelation. After that I had to go back to assistant editing for a while to feed my family, but being over-challenged is sometimes a great way to learn and grow. You're forced to step up and somehow you do.

CE: **How did the editorial challenges differ from editing *Andor* versus editing *Rogue One*?**

JG: My background is mostly in feature films. You're doing the same things, but with a big show like *Andor* you're working on a much larger scale and there are a lot more people involved. You're painting on a bigger canvas. Every three episodes is sort of a little feature. That's the structure of our storytelling. I edit some of the episodes but a lot is delegated to the other editors. As an executive producer I'm overseeing the post-production on the whole show. Eventually I inherit all of the episodes, everybody's work … and see every episode through to finish. Two seasons of *Andor* was like doing eight movies in four and a half years.

The interesting thing is, I have a lot of time to contemplate the show as I'm waiting for VFX, music and sound. If I have a good idea for how to make a particular scene or sequence better I can implement it, even well after picture lock. I'll run it by Tony and Sanne [Wohlenberg] and if we all like it,

it's in. They're usually tiny little things, but they really do add up. So *Andor*, as immense as it is, gets every bit as much scrutiny as I would give to any feature film.

***CE:* Can you talk about your longstanding collaboration with your brother, Tony Gilroy, who created *Andor*?**

JG: I've cut all of Tony's movies, everything he's ever done as a director. As siblings we've always enjoyed a communicational shorthand. We've had our own careers independent of each other, but when we have the opportunity to work together it's been quite easy. We share a sensibility. It's not hard for me to understand what he's trying to do, so when we're working together, we're aiming at the same objective. It's certainly one less thing to think about.

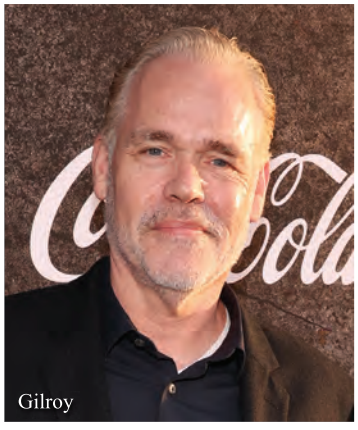
***CE:* What's it like working with family on a project like this since your other brother, Dan, was also writing on the show?**

JG: Well, I've cut all [of] Danny's movies too. It's the same communicational shorthand I guess. *Andor* is not the first time all three of us have worked together. Tony brought Dan in as a writer on *Bourne Legacy* and Tony was a producer on Dan's movie *Nightcrawler.* We all have healthy egos and are fairly competitive, but there's zero competitiveness between us. It's an interesting aspect to our dynamic. It's a tough world out there and I think we all understand that we are assets to each other.

***CE:* What is special to you about the story of *Andor*?**

JG: The two episodes that are getting most attention this season are #208 (the Ghorman Massacre) and #209 (Mon Mothma escaping from the Senate and then Bix separating from Cassian). I love all our episodes but these two in particular are so moving and emotional. We've spent seven episodes introducing and tracking the Ghormans. We are heavily invested with them as we watch this tragedy slowly unfold. When the bottom drops out and you watch this planet and its population being destroyed it's just heartbreaking.

I love #209 because of Mon Mothma's wonderful senate speech (during which she accuses Emperor Palpatine of genocide) and subsequent escape with Cassian. Really well done action, expertly cut by Yan Miles, ACE. The first time Yan showed me Bix's letter to Cassian at the end of #209, it made me cry. I think everybody can relate to a loss of love like that. What a sad and noble twist in our story.


Gilroy

CE: What advice would you give aspiring editors who want to pursue a career as a big budget narrative editor?

JG: It's a lot more technical these days than it was when I got into the business. I'm one of the last people who learned to cut on a Moviola. I could actually cut a film on a Moviola today if I had to. There's more technical stuff to know, but I would say get that under your skin but don't focus too hard on it. Cutting rooms are very specialized these days, and it's hard for assistants to climb into an editor's chair because of that specialization. You can get pigeonholed. The good news is that on an Avid, you can literally take the dailies and cut scenes if you want in parallel to the editor.

I've had assistants take scenes and cut them and show them to me. It's interesting sometimes to do that and I would encourage that, but keep your eye on where you want to be. Keep your eye on the storytelling. It's really about the storytelling. It's not about the databases, or cut lists or tech in general. You're telling a story – that's the most important thing. Not to be reductive, but you want to make people laugh and you want to make them cry. Sitting in an audience and seeing people wiping tears from their eyes or hearing a whole audience erupt in laughter is the reward for a filmmaker. There's nothing better.

***CE:* Anything else you want to share with our readers about the making of *Andor*?**

JG: Yes, I loved my crew. We really did have the best people. We had two of the editors from season 1 back with us, Yan and Matthew Cannings, who are both fantastic. Also, Morten Hojbjerg, a very gifted editor joined us to cut #210. He did a fantastic job. Craig Ferreira, who was a first assistant on S1 was bumped up to editor and cut #202. He did a great job. There's too many other people to list here but I'll also mention Gary Bowyer our lead assistant and my wingman and Elaine Waugh, our post supervisor, who held the whole thing together. I'm very proud of *Andor.* I'm glad it has touched so many people. CE

Left: Editor John Gilroy, ACE. Photo by Jesse Grant/Getty Images for Disney. ©2025 Getty Images. Right top (L-R): Muhannad Bhaier, Adria Arjona and Diego Luna. Right bottom: Genevieve O'Reilly and Benjamin Bratt. © 2025 Lucasfilm Ltd™. All rights reserved.

Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story

Peggy Tachdjian, ACE, aimed to have audience members feel as if they are "unraveling the story as we're telling it."

BY SHERI LINDEN

More than a shocking news story, the murders of Kitty and José Menendez have been a cultural touchstone for more than 30 years, beginning with their sons' first, televised trial and on through recent news of their long-fought-for chance at parole. This saga of Beverly Hills-style wealth and privilege, unspeakable abuse and gruesome violence has been told many times over the years, in various formats. For Peggy Tachdjian, ACE, the chance to work on *The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story*, the second season of Ryan Murphy and Ian Brennan's Netflix series *Monster*, was both a welcome opportunity and a daunting one.

"I was a little worried about how to do it, and how to do it justly. Because these boys committed a horrendous crime, and I didn't want to in any way make it seem cool or exploit it," Tachdjian says. "And the same with the sexual abuse – I didn't want it to be salacious. I wanted it to be gut-wrenching, and I wanted it to hit home for the viewer." Having seen Murphy's approach to other fact-based dramas, including *Impeachment: American Crime Story* and *Dahmer*, the first installment of *Monster*, she was heartened. "He always finds a way to tell the story that is respectful to the people, the victims. And so I was excited for that challenge."

Tachdjian, who received Emmy nominations for her editing on the comedy series *Only Murders in the Building*, spoke recently with *CinemaEditor* about her experience on *Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story*, a show where, she says, "everyone brought their A-game, and I worked with some of the best people I'll ever work with."

CinemaEditor: **In addition to editing two of the nine episodes, you served as a producer. How involved were you in the overall shaping of the story?**

Peggy Tachdjian, ACE: They brought me in super early, and so I was in on all the production meetings and concept meetings. I had a great team of editors. It's not like I was giving them notes or anything; I was just helping them make sure that even though we're shifting perspectives and tones in some of [the episodes], they all feel like they're in the same world.

I got to work very closely with the composers, Thomas and Julia Newman, to figure out what the sound of the show was going to be. I got to work really closely with our sound team to figure out how far we were going to go in some moments – like in the shooting scenes. One of the things I love most about the show is our sound design. I think if you felt anything at any moment it was because Gary Megregian [supervising sound editor], and [re-recording mixers] Jamie Hardt and Laura Wiest brought so much. You do your best in temp, and then when I got to the next stage, and especially when I saw how they made the guns and the screams and everything sound, they really helped make the show what it is. And also it was a fun, music-driven show. There were a lot of needle drops [notably, a couple of Milli Vanilli hits and Crowded House's "Don't Dream It's Over"]. Our music supervisors [Anna Romanoff and Amanda Krieg Thomas] were great to work with. We'd say, "Fashion montage," and they're like, "We've got you."

CE: **We see the brothers' swagger and brutality, and also their vulnerability. In dealing with the two lead actors' performances, were you aiming to draw the audience in, or were you more concerned with keeping us at a skeptical distance?**

PT: We talked about that a lot, and it was a constant battle [to balance the two approaches]. We knew that they'd killed their parents. It was never a question of did they or didn't they, it was more of a why. In one of the very first meetings that I attended, one of the very first things I heard Ryan say about this show was, "We can never forget that they are murderers. They did do this thing."

When Lyle and Erik arrive at the memorial service [the series' opening sequence], it was intentional to make them look like

Top (L-R): Nicholas Chavez, Chloë Sevigny, Javier Bardem, Cooper Koch.

movie stars. They're tan, they're beautiful, they're wearing custom suits. The idea was to throw it in the audience's face that you're only interested in this because these guys are handsome and white and rich. But we had to always remind you that there was an underlying darkness, and that they're also the villains of the story. And so you can see that at the end of the funeral, there's a look they exchange where Lyle is so smug, like, "We got away with it," and Erik looks like, "Oh my God, what did we do?" – kind of a freaked-out moment. The actors were so good at dancing that fine line between being super charming and super menacing. Nicholas [Alexander Chavez, who played Lyle] had a way of performing where he felt like a caged tiger. He would unleash this anger that was bigger than you expected. He could go from being very charming to very scary very quickly, and I love that choice in his performance because I thought it really encapsulated these two characters.

***CE:* The series is a family horror story, a legal procedural and a commentary on the media circus that surrounded the case. It uses multiple points of view and ranges from the darkly comic to the heartbreaking. With the first episode, "Blame It on the Rain," which you edited, you were laying the groundwork for all these elements. What were the concerns and priorities for you and the director, Carl Franklin, in constructing the introductory chapter?**

PT: Carl and I had a lot of conversations as we were putting the first episode together about tone and how much we should allow the viewer to laugh, and is it okay for the viewer to laugh. My first edit was darker, for sure. It was not leaning into the humor at all. Carl watched it, and we went through that [memorial service] scene quite a bit. We would add pauses, we would add looks from the audience, we would add an awkward cough in the sound design, just to show how awkward it is. There's a moment in Lyle's speech where he makes a joke and no one laughs. When we were working on it in the edit bay, Carl was like, "Let's make that pause a little longer." Like, OK. And then he's like, "A little longer. … A little longer." And finally it stretched to the point where, oh right, Lyle's so awkward. He thinks he's giving this wonderful speech from the heart.

This is innately humorous stuff. They did play that Milli Vanilli song ["Girl I'm Gonna Miss You"] at the memorial. If we tell the audience you can't laugh at these actual ridiculous things, it doesn't give them space to feel the breadth of the experience.


Tachdjian

***CE:* What was the biggest challenge in that first episode?**

PT: All the flashbacks, keeping the stories straight. We were jumping through time constantly. We didn't want for any moment for the viewer to be confused or stuck in a place where they didn't know what was going on. We wanted them to feel like they're also unraveling the story as we're telling it. They're also peeling back layers and figuring out what happened when.

We used a lot of Erik's confession in the therapist's office as an anchor point for all the flashbacks. Some of the flashbacks that are scripted to be full scenes became brief moments, and some of the flashbacks that were supposed to be just moments became a little bit fuller. And that was fun to play around with, the timing and the pacing. Cooper Koch, the actor who played Erik, did such an amazing job in that scene that you didn't want to cut away from him too much; we wanted to keep coming back to him.

***CE:* The murders themselves are shown in graphic detail in the first episode. Was piecing together that sequence pretty straightforward, or were there a lot of difficult decisions to make?**

PT: It was both. It was so straightforward and also probably one of the hardest things I've ever done in my life. We agreed early on – I'd spoken to Carl, I'd spoken to Ryan – that the scene needed to be as brutal as possible because this was the only time you were going to see it portrayed maybe as honestly as it actually happened. All the other times we were going to cut away from it.

At that very first meeting I went into, they had the boards of the crime scene photos. We'd been warned ahead of time that they were going to be there. We didn't shoot with any practical blood because we wanted to be able to shoot it as many times as possible, so we were going to add the bullet wounds and the blood in the effects, exactly where they were in the crime scene photos. So that you see exactly how many times they shot their parents, and exactly where and how they shot their parents. It's horrible to talk about, but also it was really important to not let anybody off the hook in that moment, to just say, this was brutal. You love to watch crime shows? This is what you're watching. This is a real story about real people. This is exactly how they died. It was important to show the long-lasting effects of it. CE

Left: Editor Peggy Tachdjian, ACE. Photo courtesy of Netflix. Right top (L-R): Cooper Koch, Nicholas Chavez, Javier Bardem, Chloë Sevigny. Right bottom (L-R): Cooper Koch, Jeff Perry, Nicholas Chavez. Photos by Miles Crist. © 2024 Netflix, Inc.

Severance

'Identity' was a key theme in season 2 of the Apple TV+ series

BY ADRIAN PENNINGTON

Apple TV+ series *Severance* follows employees of Lumon Industries who have had their minds 'severed' between home life and work life but their bodies are not. At the end of season 1 those boundaries had started to bleed into each other opening intriguing possibilities for showrunner Dan Erickson and director and executive producer Ben Stiller to explore.

"Identity is a key theme for season 2 where we start layering in not just 'innie' and 'outie' Mark Scout (played by Adam Scott) but all the other main characters' innies and outies," explains Geoffrey Richman ACE, who was nominated for two Emmys and an Eddie for season 1. This season, he cut episodes #201, #203, #204, #208 and #210, while also serving as a co-producer. "We're revealing the dynamic between themselves and also how their outie relates to others in the outie world."

For instance, the transitions between innies and outies in season 1 are straightforward and consistent in taking place in the office elevator (apart from the finale), whereas for Mark in season 2 those transitions now seem to take place at any point as his mind begins to re-integrate and his innie retrieves memories of his wife Gemma (Dichen Lachman), who at the start of the series he believed to be deceased.

The editors coined the onomatopoeic term "fritzing" for these moments and fellow editor Joe Landauer (*Time Cut*) had the honor of cutting the first one in #206 (he also edited episode #209). "It wasn't the first fritzing of the season but it was the first one to be shot and therefore I was the first to cut it," he says. "A lot of the visual design came from conversations between Ben and director Uta Briesewitz who devised the concept of mirroring two scenes and seeing the same setups essentially in these two different locations.

"How that would play out exactly wasn't fully understood. There were a lot of questions. Would it work? What elements are strong or less strong? They gave me maximum flexibility editorially. It was exciting to get at that scene because it unlocked a lot of thinking about how fritzing would work in other episodes, and even informed how production would shoot those scenes going forward."

Scenes depicting the re-integration of Petey (Mark's friend and co-worker who disappeared) in season 1 had given them a framework but Richman says there was the ambition to change it up and make it feel different.

One of his favorite transitions is when Mark lands back in his basement and doesn't realize which world he's in. "That builds from the language we established earlier and then takes it to a place where you're subjectively in Mark's head. I love that escalating treatment of the fritzing. Whereas Petey was losing touch with reality and the experience was very disorienting, Mark's not there (yet) so his confusion needs to feel more relatable. The way Adam plays the scene, it is so grounded that his questioning look tells you everything you need to know. There's no need for an explosive reaction."

The season 2 finale features a sequence where Mark holds a conversation between his own innie and outie, each recording their thoughts via portable camera.

"We see their initial reaction to the playback of the tape, how he is able to talk to himself for the first time. Then the skepticism of Mark's innie begins surface. He questions how the reunification with his outie will actually work and realizes how this would impact his relationship with co-worker and love interest Helly (Britt Lower). The conversation begins to turn on its head. Mark's outie's confidence in being able to convince his innie to do what he wants ebbs into frustration when he says, 'I'm in control.' The trust is broken.

Richman adds, "You're tracking all those shifts, even though not much is changing visually. The camera angles or pace of the edit change, but it's really Adam's performance that gives us a sense of a progression of their emotions and motivations."

Like Landauer, Keith Fraase, ACE, (*Past Lives*) is new to the series and agrees there was a lot of flexibility in cutting episodes #205 and #207. "In my first edits there were scenes where I pushed the comedy more than I needed to. A note came from Geoff or Ben that we're trying for honesty and if we get the truth of the scene then the absurdity of it will emerge naturally."

The visual style is very specific to *Severance* but there were always options in terms of setups. "Because the camera work is very tightly designed and controlled that allowed us to have

Top: Adam Scott. ©2025 Apple TV+.

maximum flexibility. You felt safe that you weren't betraying the tone by being liberal with how you used footage," says Fraase.

The editors, who worked from home or at Goldcrest Post in New York, shared cuts and held lots of discussions. "Eventually a cohesion and a progression emerges. It wasn't like an edict from on high that we have to follow certain rules when we're at Lumon or a different set when we're outside."

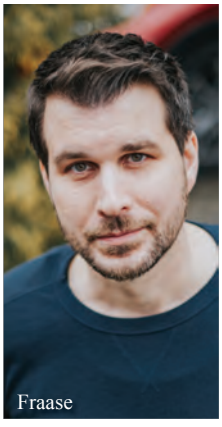
The show's score by Theodore Shapiro acted like a "glue," Fraase says. "It was like having someone there to guide you. We had a whole library of sound effects and music that helped us tonally as we're constructing, allowing the sound to kind of lead the picture."

Richman describes his most challenging scene of the season as the surreal sequence in episode #210 when Mark and Helly are trapped in the Lumon office by a marching band.

"Tackling this terrified me. They shot it over four days; the footage just kept coming in and I didn't have a clear sense of how I wanted to even organize it. I had never cut a scene like that before."

With 80 angles and takes to choose from he began by syncing them up in one multicam clip so he could play nine angles simultaneously. "I could switch between all the different options which made it a lot easier to find what I wanted. Even so, I probably spent more time than I needed to just figuring out the right way to organize the material because you're sort of swimming amid this onslaught of footage and you can go in any different direction at all times. Getting through the initial cut was the biggest hurdle. Once we had the basics down we could then react to it. Is it too slow? Should we be focused on (Lumen's deputy manager) Milchick (Tramell Tillman) or on Mark and Helly?"

Landauer picks out a deceptively simple scene in episode #206 showing Mark's and Helly's outies meeting at a Chinese restaurant. "This is the quintessential season two dynamic of relationships that are beautiful, emotional, complex and terrorizing. In season 1 our characters' lives were separate and they had no real understanding of what was happening between the two worlds. In season 2, we develop a growing realization of innie and outie worlds and here we show two people who don't know what the other knows. It becomes this dance between them of withholding information. They know more than they can say and the scene then becomes about subtle moments, glances,


Fraase


Richman


Landauer

holding a shot a little bit longer so you feel that dance between them. I could cut a scene like that forever."

Fraase singles out a montage in episode #207 "Chikhai Bardo" in which, after nearly two seasons, we finally get to see the past relationship between Mark and Gemma – whom audiences have only seen before in the briefest of flashbacks or as Ms. Casey, her personality on the severed floor.

"On the page, that was supposed to be a single time lapse shot that was filmed over the course of a day. You're seeing the books in Mark's study rise and fall in volume to signify the passage of time. You see Mark and Gemma coming in and out of different rooms, and their tender romance, all as one unbroken shot."

This episode marked the directing debut of the show's cinematographer, Jessica Lee Gagné, who photographed all of S1 and six episodes of S2 including "Chickhai Bardo," earning a producer credit too.

"Jess was always pushing to make things more frenetic and messy. She wanted us to try different things including flashes of thought which we began to drop into the timeline of this shot. These little memories are pieces of Gemma and Mark's life together and we just kept pushing it further and further. Originally, the music that was to be played underneath was a much slower, lethargic piece but as we progressed we realized we wanted to make this a loving montage of their life. It needed to be something joyous and bursting with life and of the seasons passing by.

"Jess suggested this French song ["La Valse à Mille Temps" by Jacques Brel]. Once we brought that in the montage quickly fell into place.

Fraase pulled from three hours of footage that Gagné and Stiller had shot on 16mm film intended for thoughts and memories. "We started picking selects and over time the montage started to take shape. It's one of my favorite parts of the episode because this is the first time we get to see their life together before the horror show. A lot was resting on it and it was built out of experimentation in the edit."

One of the show's plot hooks is what exactly Lumon Industries is tasking its innie inmates to do but according to Richman what we're really building to by the end of season 2 are the choices facing every character. "Certainly, Mark and Helly but also (Lumen employees) Dylan (Zach Cherry) and Irving's (John Turturro) relationships with others inside and outside the company. All of that is the bigger goal than Lumen's intentions."

Left (L-R): Editor Keith Fraase, ACE; Editor Geoffrey Richman, ACE. Photos courtesy of Accolade PR; Editor Joe Landauer. Photo by Saoirse Landauer. Right: Adam Scott. ©2025 Apple TV+.

Nobody Wants This

Maura Corey, ACE, connects with the Los Angeles-set romcom

BY CAROLYN GIARDINA

In season 1 of the Los Angeles-set Netflix romantic comedy series *Nobody Wants This*, Maura Corey, ACE, captures the attraction between agnostic podcaster Joanne, played by Kristen Bell; and Noah, a Rabbi played by Adam Brody.

In the story, the pair are met with a series of relationship obstacles created by their different backgrounds and also through characters that include Joanne's sister and podcast co-host, Morgan (Justine Lupe), and Noah's brother, Sasha (Timothy Simons).

"When I first read the script and talked to Erin Foster, the creator, during our interview, it was very apparent that the tone should be grounded in reality, although a hyper reality," Corey relates. "We wanted to make sure to take a very careful approach to a romantic comedy without falling into tropes, but staying more into what felt like real people in Los Angeles. I mean, this is a love letter to Los Angeles, so we wanted to make sure that we not only captured the sights and the sounds of the city, but also the people and these two culture clashes between the religion and the 'shiksa' (non-Jewish woman)."

In the pilot episode (which earned Corey an ACE Eddie nomination), Joanne and Noah meet at a dinner party. There's an instant connection, but also some comedic confusion. Before the party, Joanne has been told that the guests would include a divorced man and a rabbi, and when she arrives she mistakenly believes another guest is a rabbi and that Noah is the divorcee.

She learns that Noah is the rabbi during a dinner table sequence. "Table scenes can be notoriously challenging. Not only do you have to set up the geography of who's at the table, you also have to make sure that you have a through line of what our characters are going through," Corey relates.

Early conversation allowed Corey to create that hint of interest between the pair, who are seated beside one another. "We're creating a point of view throughout the whole table as to him noticing her, her noticing him. So he looks away, and I've cutaways of her looking at him. It's that thing that you do when you do find somebody interesting, that you're kind of trying to catch their eye."

The edit cuts to a high angle, wide shot of the group, as a time jump, and then returns to the table for the reveal of which guest is a rabbi. Dinner host Ashley tells a story while a joint is passed. "Ashley's telling her story of morality, and she says, 'This seems like rabbi territory,'" says Corey, who at this point used a wide shot down the table of the guests heads all turned toward Noah, except for Joanne, who is looking in the opposite direction at the guest that she still believes to be the rabbi.

Noah begins to speak, and, puzzled, Joanne questions why. "We stay in that wide chat. And then we start getting closer," Corey relates. "Now we're back into Joanne's understanding of, 'Oh, I got it wrong.' And then when you see her turn back to Noah, he's got the joint in his hand, and he puffs out because it's not a normal thing you would think a rabbi would be doing, and he hands it to Joanne, and she stares at him.

"We stay in the shot a little longer than I think normally people might," she continues. "She's clocking what just happened, and then doesn't take a hit of the joint, but she passes it on, because she's making 'good life choices' at this point. But you can see her look at him."

A series of shots follow as they continue to look at each other and engage in conversation – "having a very honest conversation about, 'Wow, this is where I'm at in my life.' And to me, it's creating a point of view, and taking this large dinner party … and just slowly inching it in until the whole world is just those two."

The scene started longer. For instance, Corey reveals that when asked his view on Ashley's situation, Noah had a longer "almost sermon-esque" response. "While it was funny, it worked better shorter," she explains. "You got the idea that he was really good at his job, that he studied the Torah, but we could come back into the romance a little quicker."

It's a dialogue-heavy series with a natural rhythm. "One of the things that informed the rhythm was the approach the actors

Above: Kristen Bell, Adam Brody. Photo by Adam Rose. ©2024 Netflix.

had to their performances, which, while they said the lines, they were very comfortable at interacting with each other as if they were having a conversation," Corey explains. "Sometimes that creates cross talk, which can be difficult for an editor, but their reactions to each other and their active listening helped create this rhythm of natural conversation." She cites as an example another scene in the pilot, during which the sisters are recording a podcast. "Morgan would be saying a line, and then Joanne would be like, 'hmm.' Even those little bits of reactions from the performance help create a different rhythm that feels very realistic."

For the dinner table scene, Corey also took advantage of rack focus shots that felt "very in the moment, almost like it's documentary style" and cutaways. "A lot of what was going on with the actors, because you cross shoot as well for comedy, they were reacting in the moment. … They had this way of conversing with each other, saying the lines, but also interplaying with each other, so it felt very natural. So there [were] a lot of cutaways, especially at this group table, that I could mine and mix in to make it really feel electric."

A notable character trajectory in season 1 involved Joanne and Noah's mother, Bina, played by Tovah Feldshuh. In the episode during which Noah brings Joanne to meet his mother in what starts out as a tense visit, Corey deliberately crafted the interaction so that neither of them would be "so unlikable to each other that they wouldn't have a coming together point." She says, "[Bina] knew she wasn't gonna like this woman who wasn't Jewish and wasn't for her son, and we wanted to make it so Joanne wasn't so mean that she would be unlikable to the mom [but it would be] tense enough where they would have a blow-up."

Corey

"We wanted to make sure to take a very careful approach to a romantic comedy without falling into tropes, but staying more into what felt like real people in Los Angeles."

The visit involved crafting another important table scene, in which they are also joined by Noah's father, brother and sister in law. "It was building out reaction shots of how the other family members were feeling tense around this being an interrogation of Joanne, making sure we got the proper performances of Joanne to make her feel like she was defending herself, but also being the strong, independent person she is. Because there's a big turn in that episode where Bina realizes that Joanne's a nice person."

She constructed the scene with everyone's point of view until Noah finally blows up – "If he blows up too early, it's going to seem weird, and if we let it go on too long, it's gonna be uncomfortable, and it needed to be just uncomfortable enough." It was a tricky balance, Corey says, "because we didn't want to make Bina too mean, but we needed her to be mean enough to make it a catalyst moment."

Season 1's editorial team also included Keenan Hiett, Jen Rosenthal and Catherine Cloutier. A second season is in the works, slated for release this fall.

Left top: Adam Brody, Kristen Bell. Photo by Hopper Stone. Left bottom: Kristen Bell, Justine Lupe. Photo courtesy of Netflix.
Right (From top): Editor Maura Corey, ACE. Photo courtesy of Netflix; Jackie Tohn, Tovah Feldshuh, Timothy Simons, Kristen Bell. Photo by Adam Rose; Kristen Bell, Adam Brody. Photo by Stefania Rosini. ©2024 Netflix.

SEASON 2

The Last of Us

Timothy A. Good, ACE, resets the audience's compass having delivered the blunt force trauma of a character death

BY ADRIAN PENNINGTON

HBO's serialization of video game *The Last Of Us* was lauded by fans of the original and those new to the story largely because of a surrogate father-daughter relationship that formed the narrative core. The second season stays faithful to the game in bravely ripping that bond apart with consequences that the storytellers knew required careful handling.

"Ellie and Joel are characters I've fallen in love with," says Timothy A. Good, ACE, an Emmy winner for his work on S1 who returns with a co-producer credit on S2. "In a weird way I feel like a parent with a responsibility to shepherd their experiences. So, when I found out that the second episode is where Joel ultimately meets his end, I told [showrunner Craig Mazin], 'I feel like I brought these characters into the world and I want to make sure I do them justice."

The season begins with a brief reprise of the final moments of S1 where Ellie (Bella Ramsey) asks Joel (Pedro Pascal): "Swear to me that everything you said about the Fireflies is true." He replies, "I swear," and after a pensive pause she replies: "Okay."

"The reason to start with this is because it resets the central problem which is that Joel has lied and Ellie probably knows it and is just okay at the moment," Good relates. "She doesn't want to tackle Joel or face facts herself right then. Setting that in motion from the get-go allows you to see that this lie is going to hang over the entire story."

Episode #202, which Good also cut, contains the unflinching murder of Joel, a scene that Good says is the hardest thing he has worked period. "Nothing compared to that ever. It had to be perfect.

"I can't tell you how hard this episode was. It was enormous. In early cuts I decided to present everything. A lot of torture, hitting and brutality. That was then paired back based on what we felt was a proper build. In some versions it felt too much like we're torturing the audience. Because they know what's coming, we didn't want to delay the inevitable longer than necessary."

He describes a moment when Joel's hand goes limp and drops. "That's when his nervous system just stops and then we slowly go back to Ellie. When it happens, in a strange way it's a softer landing as opposed to a sudden shock. It almost allows a breath of a couple of seconds for the audience to have enough time to absorb it and then follow Ellie's reaction to it."

He followed audience reaction on social media following the episode's airing. "It landed better than I ever imagined. I guess I assumed that everyone knew what was coming but they didn't. What was really nice was seeing just how many people resonated with the scene where Joel dies, how sad they were about losing Joel, and how much they felt for Ellie."

The loss of the pair's dynamic, however, presented the show with a problem: how to move the drama forward without a key character. Good, who worked on the third season of *The O.C.* in 2016 during which a character named Marissa Cooper was killed off, says the solution was similar.

"We had to reset. We have to reset the audience to understand how it feels when someone dies. I remember Craig saying that people dying doesn't happen to any timeline. You are never ready for it. Which is why we decided to do this early on in the season.

"*The Last of Us* is in large part about seeing how people work through issues and make decisions when some of those decisions are not going to be good ones. It's how people react when they lose the thing that they love the most. It's something that everyone experiences. I experienced two family losses this year and it helped me connect to Ellie even more. I understood how alone her character feels."

The third episode, edited by Simon Smith, ACE, (*Andor*) is a lot calmer. "We had to give Ellie time to recover and to reconnect the audience with her character and what she is trying to achieve by going after the person who killed Joel. In many ways the episode was about giving the audience a chance to grieve for Joel."

Good reveals that the production reshot Joel's grave scene in episode #203 because of gloomy weather conditions. "They re-shot it in Montana in this beautiful field with the sun shining. It was like giving the audience cathartic closure on that character and allowing us to all grieve."

The episode also moves Ellie onto a new course by connecting her with Dina (Isabela Merced). "Simon did an incredible job creating this new dynamic. So much so you could feel echoes of Joel and Ellie as they're having conversations about bands and traveling these wide open vistas. Ultimately, it's in service of Ellie's goal of exacting justice for Joel."

Her target is Abby (Kaitlyn Dever) whom the audience initially demonizes but who (outside of the game players) do not know is set to become a hero character.

"The major challenge for that character in #202 was to manage her decision-making process," Good says. "All the decisions that she makes have repercussions throughout her whole group. My job was for us to see the recognition of all these moments on her face so we understand the decisions she's making. A lot of the dialogue of other characters including Joel, fall off camera because I'm focusing solely on the decisions that Abby has to make so that we understand what she's doing. She's like the queen on the chessboard. She's able to get everyone into the position that she needs them to be in."

He continues, "In a way Abby and Ellie are twins revolving in the same universe causing the same kinds of damage towards one another. Can violence heal a loss or is something deeper? All of these things are circling each other."

The writers decided to provide some backstory to Abby and her father. "In the game you have no idea why she murders Joel but in a drama that's not sustainable over seven episodes. Gaming is an active medium where you can keep going to find out the answer. We felt you have to understand her motivation."

While season 1 was driven by Joel and Ellie's cross state journey, S2 introduces multiple storylines involving the religious cult, The Seraphites, and the militia, WLF.

"In season 1, everything was experienced from Ellie and Joel's perspective," Good says. "This time we're breaking out of the first-person experiential, which is more like a video game, and going into a world building situation where you see these separate elements. For example, we gave Tommy (Gabriel Luna) room to become a standout character in the second episode. Then, we don't see him again until #207."

The season's pivotal moment is arguably not the death of Joel but the end of #206. This flashback episode (also cut by Smith), shows Joel admitting the truth to Ellie and Ellie says she can't forgive him for saving her life, while leaving the door ajar for reconciliation.


Good

"From the reaction to episode 2 it seemed everyone assumed that Joel and Ellie never got a chance to have a conversation about what happened. The audience felt that was so unfair. In fact, we teased that something happened between them in #202 when Ellie says, "We're better now," and appears sad when learning that Joel has gone on patrol without her. We set this up to pay off in the last scene of #206 which is the fulcrum that propels Ellie into the final episode and her quest for vengeance.

"You should feel her fire of knowing that they were on a path to reconciliation and that that was stolen from her. You're on her side – until the moment in the finale where she fires the gun. By accidentally killing Mel and her unborn child she realizes how far this this idea of avenging Joel has taken her. It causes her to break down. She's still a kid and she's just killed a baby. She couldn't help it but nor could she save the baby.

"At that point, what we're trying to say to the audience is that everything has collateral damage. When you're on a violent quest for vengeance you don't know how it's going to end."

Good says that among the editorial team there were a lot of shared conversations about characters and cuts. "I will show everything I'm working on because I just feel like if I'm in a situation where I'm closed off to something I'm not recognizing I need other people to tell me if it doesn't make sense."

As co-producer, Good particularly enjoyed working on the sound mixing stage to ensure consistency over the course of the season. "I love all the little details to make sure our story is cohesive and coherent. For example, there was a moment when Bella pronounces the character name of Eugene differently to how she's called the character every time up until now. It's very subtle but we needed to fix it. Since there wasn't a version we could use of her saying the name correctly, we ADR'd it and suddenly everything was consistent.

He says, "I love the ability to have that sort of overarching experience with all the other editors. We are a very happy crew. We love each other and we let each know how things are working, or not, and celebrate together when we get the cut done."

The finale, cut by Good and Emily Mendez (Mendez also edited #201 with Good and cut #204 solo), ends with Abby overlooking "Seattle Day 1" which hints that season 3 will follow what happens with Abby up to that point.

"From what I understand, video gamers were very confused because they didn't want to play as Abby but as they went along they understood the character and in a weird way by the time that Abby reconnects with Ellie in the game, people were not sure if they really still liked Ellie. That is the absolute challenge of season 3." CE

Left. Editor Timothy A. Good, ACE. Photo by Peter Zakhary.
Right: Isabela Merced and Bella Ramsey. Photo by Liane Hentscher/HBO. © 2024 Warner Bros. Discovery, Inc.

How to Train Your Dragon

Wyatt Smith, ACE, on Dean DeBlois' live action reimagining of the 2010 animated classic: "It was important for him to protect this world that he created."

BY CAROLYN GIARDINA

Writer/director Dean DeBlois and Wyatt Smith, ACE, had an important initial conversation before starting production of *How to Train Your Dragon*, Universal's live action reimagining of DreamWorks Animation's beloved 2010 classic. "We talked about how there's this incredible fan base for this unbelievable piece of art that's come before. But you do have to kind of pick the lane of what you're going to do, knowing if you make any changes, there's going to be certain people who reject that change, because you're changing something perfect."

It was a unique situation as DeBlois co-wrote and co-directed the animated original (alongside Chris Sanders), and also wrote and directed the second and third films in the animated trilogy. "It was important for him to protect this world that he created, based off Cressida Cowell's books, and to respect the fan base," says Smith, who himself had just come off Disney's live action adaptation of *The Little Mermaid*.

Since its June 13 release, *How to Train Your Dragon* has become one of the year's highest grossing films, topping $567 million worldwide at press time.

DeBlois' moving coming-of-age story and adventure is again set on the fictional Isle of Berk where Vikings slay dragons. But protagonist Hiccup (Mason Thames), the son of the strong Viking leader Stoick the Vast (Gerard Butler), thinks differently, and doesn't want to become a dragon slayer. Then he forms an unlikely friendship with a Night Fury dragon, Toothless, and together they change the misunderstood conflict between the humans and dragons – all set to John Powell's iconic score.

"For Dean, he's adapting himself," Smith notes. "There's something very unusual in this movie. It's not him trying to interpret and personalize someone else's work. So that also leads to not needing to change too much, and then also allowing all these other special things to come through like having Gerard Butler reprise his [voice role] as Stoick, as a live action character. So we talked about the strength of allowing things to be very similar to the animated film, and spending our time more on enriching the world, making the dragons feel real, making Toothless feel real."

DeBlois aimed to further develop some of the character relationships, particularly that between Hiccup and Stoick, who doesn't understand his son – "It is the core of the movie," says Smith – and that of Hiccup and love interest Astrid (Nico Parker).

"It was really important to get Astrid right, and that actually took a bit of editorial work as well," the editor notes. "By giving her a bit of a backstory – that she's a loner, that she doesn't have everything handed to her – it helps expand her character more.

"It was also very easy for her to come off too tough and too harsh," he continues, citing as an example a scene during which the young Vikings are in a sort of library, studying dragon species. "When all the kids leave, and then Hiccup and Astrid have that kind of private conversation, that was one where we definitely went back a couple times and pulled some lines and finessed some reactions so that she didn't come off as critical. She was very clear about where she's coming from, but also being a little understanding."

The editor marvels at DeBlois' "incredible" skills with creating performance. "He knows these characters so well. He's lived with them for so long. So in terms of editing a scene and perspectives, that all was very natural."

This was also animation vet DeBlois' live action directorial debut. "He was far from a first time director, but in some respects, he's a first time director," Smith says, noting that this amounted to great collaboration throughout the departments.

One key element was creating the nuance of the sentient, CG animated Toothless. Early on, DeBlois opened up the conversation with Smith and Randy Thom of Skywalker Sound, who provided Toothless' vocalization for both the animated and live action films. "We could start to build Toothless' performance together. I was always very confident

Above: Hiccup (Mason Thames) and Night Fury dragon, Toothless. Photo courtesy of Universal Pictures.

in the live action but [DeBlois] would always be like, 'I need a dismissive grunt here.' All these different subtle vocalizations from Toothless brought him to life even before he was on the screen. That was incredible to see how well Dean immediately knew what Toothless' performance had to be."

Other subtleties in going from animation to a live action world included the understanding that Toothless doesn't necessarily understand English. Says Smith, "There was a lot of discussion about just what became too anthropomorphized, which the animated version allowed more because with cartoons everything's broader. Everything expressed is so much bigger, whereas reality is flatter and is more reserved."

One of the animated film's most iconic scenes that will feel familiar to fans in this adaptation is the "Forbidden Friendship" sequence, during which Hiccup and Toothless slowly begin to trust each other, culminating with the moment that Hiccup reaches out his hand and Toothless touches it with his nose. "There's a few signature moments in the film that cannot change," Smith asserts, noting that the first half of the scene, again including moments such as the pair eating a fish, is "a little slightly different shape. But once we make that shift into the sunset hour, it's pretty spot on. I think it's the last five shots that are actually frame to frame to the music."

Says Smith, "There's so many things that work so well in that original film that when you try to break them and move away from them, they aren't as successful. So I'm very happy with the route that we took and the discoveries that we made of where we should be exactly the same and then where we can break away from."


Smith

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One area that they tried was entering the film with dragons attacking the village, but from the dragons' POV and without Hiccup's familiar voiceover. But there was a lot conveyed in that monologue – introducing the world, many characters and the different species of dragons. "It's a lot of work for an audience," Smith says, explaining that they brought back the voiceover. "That voice really helps it stick together, and really helps to guide you through and gives you that perspective if you're going to watch this movie through Hiccup, who does think differently."

Meanwhile, they didn't try to reinvent the well-known "Test Drive" sequence, during which Hiccup first takes to the sky with Toothless, set to Powell's soaring score. "It's also the second most memorable sequence from the animated film, that's so fulfilling that there was a fear of robbing an audience of that satisfaction."

The film's 1400 VFX shots including the flying sequence were created by production VFX supervisor Christian Manz and the team at Framestore. The actors were filmed on a specially designed gimbal/animatronic, and the finished shots were either hybrid (live action combined with CGI) or fully CG. "A lot of it was finding the best performances," says Smith. "It's very important that we be very confident in our performances, especially the zero gravity section and all that free falling so that Christian and Framestore had the time to make it look as real as possible.

He adds, "That was one of the absolute priorities, to edit that sequence and hand it over to visual effects as soon as we could, so that it could be as real as humanly possible by the finished film."

Left top: Hiccup (Mason Thames) and Stoick (Gerard Butler). Left bottom: Hiccup (Mason Thames) and Astrid (Nico Parker). Photos by Helen Sloan.
Right top: Editor Wyatt Smith, ACE. Photo courtesy of Smith. Right bottom: Hiccup (Mason Thames) and Toothless. Photo courtesy of Universal Pictures.

Ted Woerner, ACE
1956 - 2025

Ted Woerner, ACE, an Emmy and Eddie Award winning editor with a passion for documentaries, died April 20 from pancreatic cancer at home in Los Angeles.

Born in San Francisco, Woerner went to San Diego State University to study political science and journalism. He started his career as a freelance journalist and camera assistant on CBS Channel 8 in San Diego and then went on to become an anchor and news reporter in Oahu, Hawaii, for ABC affiliate KITV. He returned to Los Angeles and began his career as an independent editor and producer. His work ranged from *Project Runway* to the *Unsolved Mysteries* reboot and *Q - Into the Storm*. He won a Primetime Emmy in 2021 and an ACE Eddie in 2022 for his work on the Netflix series *Cheer*.

But documentary projects were closest to his heart. He recently completed *Sequoias of the Sea*, an independent film about the disappearing kelp forest off the California coast. It won the Environment Award at the International Ocean Festival. He worked right up to his death, editing a Ukrainian war documentary and passion project, *Under the Cherry Tree*.

His love of life and his curiosity about the world made him a remarkable human being. He was an early adopter of technology, lover of the ocean, a committed triathlete and was crazy about politics. He cared deeply about social justice and the underrepresented; his body of work is testament to that.

ACE meant a great deal to him, and he was a proud member of the community.

He is survived by his wife, Rebecca; daughter Esme, and family and many friends all over the world. He will be missed tremendously.

Photos courtesy of Omega Hsu ACE, and the Woerner family.

PETITION FOR
EDITORS RECOGNITION

The American Cinema Editors Board of Directors has been actively pursuing film festivals and awards presentations, domestic and international, that do not currently recognize the category of Film Editing. The Motion Picture Editors Guild has joined with ACE in an unprecedented alliance to reach out to editors and industry people around the world.

The organizations listed on the petition already recognize cinematography and/or production design in their annual awards presentations. Given the essential role film editors play in the creative process of making a film, acknowledging them is long overdue. We would like to send that message in solidarity. Please join us as we continue the effort to elevate the perception of editors everywhere.

You can help by signing the petition to help get recognition for film editors by asking these organizations to add the Film Editing category to their annual awards:

- Sundance Film Festival
- Shanghai International Film Festival, China
- San Sebastian Film Festival, Spain
- Byron Bay International Film Festival, Australia
- New York Film Critics Circle
- New York Film Critics Online
- National Society of Film Critics

We would like to thank the organizations that have recently added the Film Editing category to their Annual Awards:

- Durban International Film Festival, South Africa
- New Orleans Film Festival
- Tribeca Film Festival
- Washington DC Area Film Critics Association
- Film Independent – Spirit Awards
- Los Angeles Film Critics Association
- Chicago Film Critics Association
- Boston Film Festival
- The International Animated Film Society – Annie Awards
- Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror – Saturn Awards

Please sign our petition at:

www.EditorsPetition.com

Now endorsed by the Motion Picture Sound Editors, Art Directors Guild, Cinema Audio Society, American Society of Cinematographers, Canadian Cinema Editors, and Guild of British Film and Television Editors

Committee for Creative Recognition

ACE

MOTION PICTURE EDITORS GUILD

{CUTS WE LOVE}

BY ADRIAN PENNINGTON

School of Rock

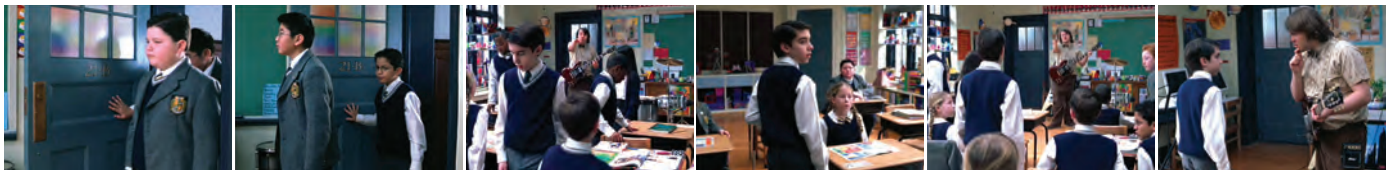
2003 | Director Richard Linklater | Editor Sandra Adair, ACE

Richard Linklater's biggest box-office success to date is comedy musical *School of Rock*, for which his longtime collaborator Sandra Adair, ACE, was nominated for an Eddie. Here, she discusses the scene where struggling rock guitarist and depressed teacher Dewey Finn (Jack Black) forms a band with the pupils of his class.

"I feel this scene embodies the spirit of the creation of a band and how exciting it is to be the leader of the band," Adair explains. "And it always makes me smile."

"Dewey is in the restroom when he hears music. He trots upstairs and sees the kids in a classical music class. You can see from just his eyebrows that he's already scheming about putting together a new band. He just got kicked out of his own band so the idea of being able to reignite his passion comes alive.

"He runs outside to his van, grabs some instruments and runs back upstairs. When the kids come in to the classroom, he gets them to start playing a rock song. Of course, they're supposed to be quiet so there's one moment where he grabs the cymbal to quiet it."



When Adair learned that Black was playing the lead she thought that meant improvised performances. "I worried that it was going to be all over the place, wild and uncuttable, because things aren't going to match," she says. "The truth is that Jack was incredibly disciplined. He rehearsed the heck out of everything with Rick and music supervisor Randall Poster who was on set most of the time. He understood the character because he kind of is that character in real life.

"Even picking up the keyboard from the van he gives a little kick. He just brings so much energy and physicality to his performance."

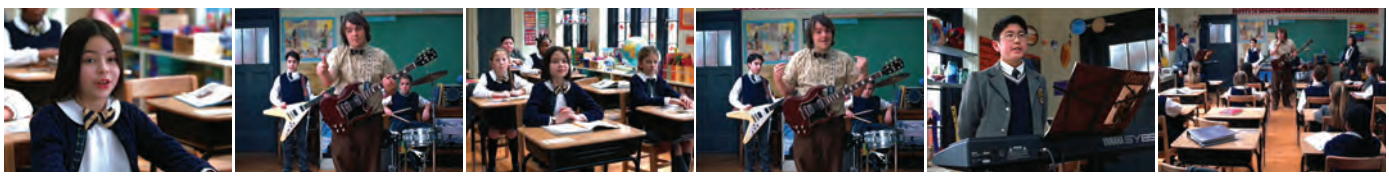
Another reason the film continues to resonate are the performances of the kids. “They start out being really uptight in tailored uniforms. Once he starts to loosen up and show who he is to these kids, they loosen up and start to express themselves.

“There are a couple of little moments in this scene where at the end of the take they had a little smile. At the very end of the shot with keyboard player Lawrence, played by trained classical pianist Robert Tsai, you see him smile. I think it’s joyous.”

The last part of this scene when the new band plays together was shot as one take. “Out of 15 or 18 takes it was finding the best performances from the kids. Jack was pretty consistent throughout.

“Honestly, there wouldn’t have been a wrong way to cut this film. I don’t want to say it was easy because I don’t want to diminish the work I did, but it wasn’t trying to fix things. I always had the material that I needed.”

Adair’s first film with Linklater was in 1992 on *Dazed and Confused*. “We didn’t know each other and there was no mutual trust. He was in the cutting room every minute of editing that film. Now, I get dailies, cut the scenes, and Rick comes in, gives me a few notes then leaves. It’s really very fluid and very trusting. I trust his opinion. He trusts mine. I understand the kinds of films he makes and who he is and why he’s making films.



“I feel like *School of Rock* was kissed by the film gods in that we had writer Mike White, Rick and Jack. You couldn’t wish for a better combination.” CE

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