

# CINEMAEDITOR

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*Featuring*

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*In this issue*

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THINGS**

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FOR A DRAMA SERIES**

*"CHAPTER EIGHT: THE RIGHTSIDE UP"*

DEAN ZIMMERMAN, ACE • CASEY CICHOCKI

**"A MOMENTOUS FAREWELL.  
A MONUMENTAL EPIC."**

THE TIMES



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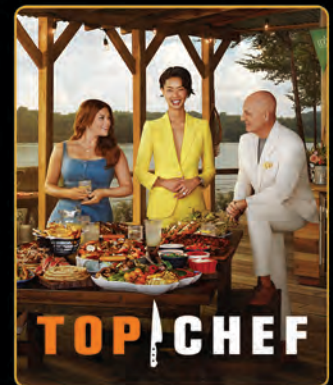
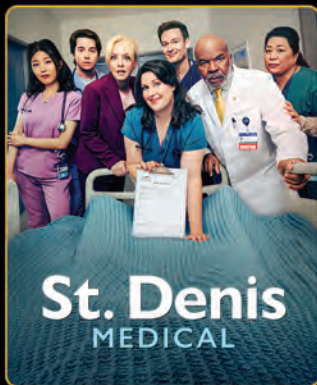
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# CONSIDERATION



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# Documentary filmmakers

## shape story in real time with DaVinci Resolve Studio

Shooting, editing, grading, and finishing a Slamdance documentary with Blackmagic Design.



When directors Noah Dixon and Ori Segev set out to make “The Bulldogs,” a feature documentary about the community of East Palestine, Ohio, in the wake of a catastrophic train derailment, they chose the Blackmagic URSA Mini Pro 4.6K G2 for production and DaVinci Resolve Studio for the entire post production workflow. The film, which premiered at the 2026 Slamdance Film Festival, was shot, edited, graded, and finished entirely within the Blackmagic ecosystem.

Segev, who served as director of photography and colorist, relied on the URSA Mini Pro 4.6K G2 as a lightweight, adaptable tool for a small documentary crew. “It’s a powerful camera, and I love using it for documentary work because it is the right balance of size and weight to rig into any situation,” he says. “The color palette of the sensor is fantastic, and it renders skin tones in a really beautiful way.” The team paired the camera with a 16–40mm Angenieux Optimo zoom and recorded

in Blackmagic RAW 5:1 in open gate, shooting over 40 terabytes across a year of production without ever generating a single proxy. “Everything ran incredibly smoothly,” says Segev. “Like butter.”

The most significant workflow advantage came from DaVinci Resolve Studio’s cloud collaboration tools, which allowed Dixon and Segev to edit and grade simultaneously inside the same project. Each had mirrored drives at their homes and shared office, working in the same timeline at the same time. “DaVinci Resolve allowed us to color and edit simultaneously, which was huge,” says Dixon. “We weren’t just assembling the story, we were shaping mood and tone at the same time.”

That parallel workflow had a direct impact on creative decisions. Segev could begin grading footage as soon as they returned from a shoot, and Dixon would see near final images as he shaped scenes. “We love editing with images that are as close to final as possible because it



**“DAVINCI RESOLVE ALLOWED US TO COLOR AND EDIT SIMULTANEOUSLY  
– WE WERE SHAPING MOOD AND TONE AT THE SAME TIME.”**

has a huge impact on creative decision making,” adds Segev. “We could experiment in real time, pushing something to feel more like dawn even if it was shot at a different time of day, and immediately see how it played in the cut.”

For the grade, Segev worked with a deliberately minimal toolkit within DaVinci Resolve Studio. He built a custom LUT as a starting point, then relied on the HSL Qualifier to shape highlights and introduce subtractive saturation, often dialing in a subtle bleach bypass effect using a layer mixer with a touch of grain and halation. He also became a regular user of the Color Slice tool for its intuitive control over color density. “One of my overall favorite tools is the Analog Damage effect,” he adds. “I’ve used it on so many projects. It’s got the ability to create so many different lo fi looks.”

One creative challenge involved incorporating archival news footage that arrived in a range of resolutions, bit rates, and formats. Rather than

attempt a digital cleanup, the team re-recorded the footage off a CRT television and graded that version in DaVinci Resolve Studio. “That process gave all the archival footage a natural texture that felt more intentional and cohesive in the context of the film,” says Segev.

DaVinci Resolve Studio’s broader toolset also helped the team handle real world documentary challenges. Dixon relied on the Voice Isolation tool to salvage dialogue recorded in unpredictable sound environments, and used the built in masking and VFX tools in Fusion to remove visual distractions that pulled viewers out of the frame. Fusion also handled paint outs and compositing without ever leaving the project. “Having everything in one robust program saved us a huge amount of time,” says Segev. “That flexibility made DaVinci Resolve an incredibly powerful tool for us.”

“The Bulldogs” had its world premiere at Slamdance 2026.



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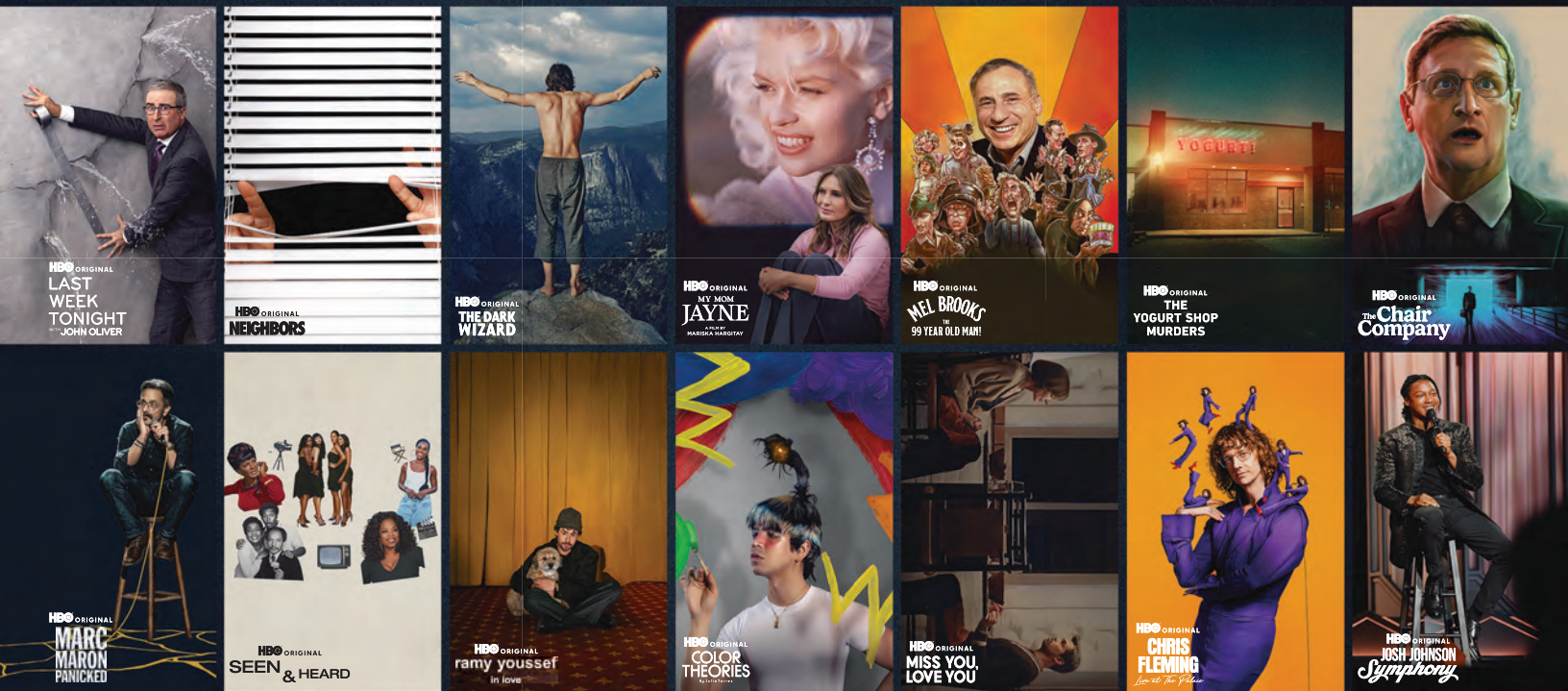
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## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD



**H**ello, fellow editors and editing fans around the globe. I hope the season is bringing cozy warmth and sunshine to those of you in the northern hemisphere.

And we have additional reasons to feel optimistic. As of this writing, post-production tax credit bill AB 2319 is in California's Appropriations Committee in Sacramento. The bill was authored by Assemblymember Nick Schultz and sponsored by the California Post Alliance (CAPA). Representatives from the Motion Picture Editors Guild are working closely with them to get a bill passed. It's both inspiring and essential to see our work and our community being recognized at the state level, especially at a time when the heart of the film industry continues to shrink here in Hollywood. Please check the CAPA and MPEG web sites to see how you can support the effort. Now more than ever, we must remain diligent and united, so that ACE members – and all in our community – can continue finding ways to sustain the profession we love.

Speaking of love for our profession, the Eddie Awards once again brought all the glitz and glamour in celebration of this year's honorees and their outstanding achievements in editing. The energy in the room was electric – one special night each year when editors are truly placed in the spotlight and recognized for the artistry of what we do. And I can't offer enough praise to everyone who works so tirelessly behind the scenes to make it one of the best shows in Hollywood.

If the Eddies aren't enough to make you fall in love with editing all over again each year, then IA/VA is the cherry on top. This year's panel of editing masters was incredibly entertaining – and more than willing to share behind-the-scenes stories and insights into their creative process on their five Academy Award-nominated films. And if you weren't able to attend this year's event at the DGA, it's definitely worth watching on our website – you won't want to miss it.

And if you can believe it, we're already in Emmy season. Does anyone else feel like awards season is basically year-round now? So hold on to your hats – and start catching up on all the incredible shows submitted for Emmy consideration. Too much to choose from? Absolutely. But the good news is, this issue highlights a few of this year's standout gems.

Also in this issue, our 2025 ACE interns share their experiences launching their careers – and reflect on everything they learned during their respective internship programs in Los Angeles, New York, and London. This has become one of the most successful mentoring initiatives in ACE history, and I couldn't be more proud – not only of the interns I've met over the past 20 years, but also of the dedicated committee members who have given so much to make this program one of ACE's true flagships.

Other ACE committees have been busy as well – and it's been wonderful to see so much activity across the organization. Our New York contingent has a full slate of gatherings and events, so if you're on the East Coast, be sure to take advantage of the opportunities to connect with your peers. Our International Committee continues to network and build relationships with editors around the world, strengthening our global community and supporting the profession on an international scale.

Meanwhile in Los Angeles, the Social Committee has been bringing editors together in the best ways possible – organizing hikes, bowling outings, visits to The Gentle Barn for some much-needed animal hugs, and even our first backyard movie night celebrating the work of our own members. And ACE was also well represented at NAB this year, where some of us did a little reconnaissance to see what's emerging to support our industry, while other editors were in the spotlight – sharing their artistic talents and drawing huge crowds. Simply put: ACE is buzzing.

As I've said for years, I get far more out of being part of ACE than I could ever give back – and I hope you'll take advantage of these opportunities to connect, participate, and share in what makes this community so special.

As we dive into our summer, keep an eye out for our stellar EditFest program in August. It's always a hot ticket! And let's continue to share stories. Share knowledge. Be kind. Be respectful. And cut, cut, cut! **CE**

– SABRINA PLISCO, ACE, President



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LAURA ZEMPEL, ACE

201 • ALL THE THINGS WE'RE NEVER GOING TO HAVE

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203 • THE INCREASING FLIMSINESS OF ANY CERTAINTIES ABOUT THE FUTURE

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THE BEST TV SHOW  
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Official Periodical of American Cinema Editors, Inc. Founded November 28, 1950.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

**Matt Allen** is the recipient of the Eric Zumbrennen 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.

**Steve Hullfish, ACE**, is the editor of numerous feature films, documentaries, and TV series. He is the author of eight books on editing and post-production and the host of the Art of the Cut podcast.

**Walter Fernandez** was the Editor in Chief of *Cinema-Editor* magazine from August 2010 until June 2013. He has worked in marketing and distribution at IMAX and the MPAA. He has written for *CinemaEditor* since 2003.

**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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*American Cinema Editors is an honorary society celebrating excellence within the art of motion picture editing. Our objective is to advance the prestige and dignity of the editing profession by elevating recognition for our creative contributions, promoting mutual respect among our peers, supporting diversity and inclusion, and endeavoring to be ambassadors for our unique art.*




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Episode 302: Sick As Your Secrets



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# WHAT'S NEW!

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 53RD ANNIE AWARDS



The KPop Demon Hunters editorial team at the 53rd Annie Awards.

**C**ongratulations to the winners of the 53rd Annie Awards for animation. *KPop Demon Hunters* dominated the feature competition, winning 10 awards including best animated feature and best feature editorial, which was presented to Nathan Schauf and the *KPop Demon Hunters* editorial team. Also Feb. 21 at UCLA's Royce Hall, editors Tony Christopherson and Joie Lim collected an Annie Award for editing *Common Side Effects*, in the TV/media category. 

## SAVE THE DATE

**EDIT**  
**FEST**  
**CONNECT**

Join us on Aug. 22 at Disney's  
Historic Grand Central Air Terminal.  
Tickets on sale soon!

In the meantime, watch last year's  
EditFest panels at [EditFestGlobal.com](http://EditFestGlobal.com)

## WE'VE MOVED



The ACE offices are still on the  
Paramount lot but have changed  
buildings. The new address is:

5555 Melrose Ave  
Dreier Bldg., Room #104  
Los Angeles, CA 90038  
Ph: 323-956-2900

## MEET 2026'S ERIC ZUMBRUNNEN FELLOW




**S**tephen Takashima is this year's recipient of the Eric Zumbrunnen Fellowship.


Takashima began his career as a freelance editor, cutting narrative shorts and features. He edited Horace Priestess' 2020 drama *Fall Nights in China Grove* and assisted on Bao Tran's 2020 Kung Fu comedy *The Paper Tigers*. Most recently he premiered *Don't Kill My Vibe*, an indie feature that he co-wrote, directed, and edited at NewFilmmakers Los Angeles.

Showing an early interest in editing and filmmaking, Takashima made his first documentary project in high school before attending Wheaton College, where he studied communications and psychology.

According to the committee, "We were impressed by Stephen's determination to make his own opportunities, and his eagerness to meet and learn from other editors. While he enjoys seeing his own ideas come to life on film he also values the alchemy that comes from collaboration."

Outside of work, Takashima teaches and studies Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.

The Fellowship is named in memory of 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, 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. 



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*The Telegraph*



# WHAT'S NEW!

## NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ACE SOCIAL COMMITTEE VISITS THE GENTLE BARN

The ACE Social Committee hosted an April 18 field trip to The Gentle Barn in Santa Clarita, attended by roughly 50 ACE members. The Gentle Barn gives sanctuary to animals that are too old, sick, or injured to be adopted, rehabilitates them, and when they are ready, partners with them to help people suffering from trauma by connecting them to the love and magic of animals. [CE](#)



### CINEMAEDITOR MAGAZINE



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### WELCOME

American Cinema Editors  
welcomes new ACE members:

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# Continuing Education

BY HARRY B. MILLER III, ACE

I'm smart! Not like everyone says ... like dumb!"

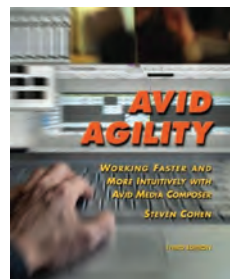
– Fredo Corleone, *The Godfather Part II*



In the spirit of the above Fredo quote, I have several sources of educational information that I try to keep up with, to better use the tools needed for editing. To keep me smart. Not dumb. Like everybody ... oh, nevermind.

I used to read manuals, long ago. I believe I read the entire Media Composer manual at one time, although skipping areas I had no interest in. The Media Composer manual still exists, firstly online under 'Help,' then 'Media Composer Family Help.' It is a helpful searchable resource. But like most things these days, a Google internet search is often quicker to the correct answer, with more links to explore.

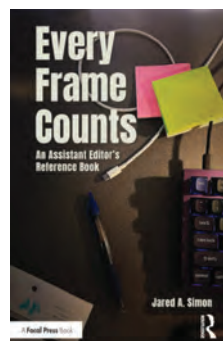
Besides the Media Composer manual, there are a couple of great books about working with the software and editing in general.



## **Avid Agility** by Steven Cohen, ACE

Although last released in 2012, *Avid Agility* remains a great resource for understanding Media Composer. "Profusely illustrated" (what?) according to Amazon's Overview, most of the ideas and instruction remain close to what they

are today. Rather than changing the basics, over the years Avid has merely added to the basic editing tools and techniques. Steve Cohen has forgotten more about Media Composer than most editors will ever know. Perhaps he'll find the time to work on an update?



## **Every Frame Counts:** **An Assistant Editor's Reference Book** by Jared A. Simon

Jared is an assistant film editor, who has written a terrific manual not only on the technical aspects of being an assistant, but the whole idea of the position, including such simple but obvious tips as saying, "Good morning," at the start of the day, how to respond to emails (yes, respond

to everything), when to keep bins locked, and to always write things down. It is Media Composer-centric, but also covers using FileMaker Pro, and all the areas an assistant editor must be knowledgeable. It is both a practical and technical guide to most everything an assistant editor will encounter.



## **Master the Workflow**

Lawrence Jordan, ACE, and Richard Sanchez are experienced film editing professionals and have created several online courses and tools

for film professionals. They include Becoming a Professional Assistant Film & Television Editor and Feature Film Assistant Editor Immersion courses, and the tools The Digital Codebook, EDL Importer, Script Binder, The Digital Lined Script, and TCFXM 2.0 Timecode Plugin for the Digital Codebook. Their YouTube channel has some tutorials but is mostly interviews with editors.

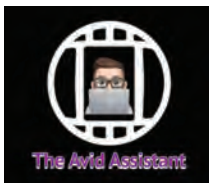
YouTube is where a great deal of educational information is available. There are many (*many*) online creators who can give great depth on most any subject and illustrate exactly what they're doing visually.



## **Kevin P. McAuliffe**

Kevin P. McAuliffe is an editor at Extreme Reach and professor at Seneca College in Toronto. He has

created several series of videos and written tutorials on many aspects of Avid Media Composer. His YouTube channel, Let's Edit MC, has 163 video tutorials, from 15 to 30 minutes long, dissecting such topics as project creation, dailies workflows, audio mixing, and exporting. There are many BCC/Sapphire tutorials as well, covering keying, lens flares, transitions, etc. A lot of the tutorials are for very old versions of the software, as old as 9 years old, so much may no longer be relevant. Kevin has also published multiple 'how-to' columns on the website ProVideo Coalition. Most of these are from 2025/26, and cover many of the same topics, but are all up to date. 'Profusely illustrated' (my description) as well.



### The Avid Assistant

Jack Brown is an offline editor in the UK. Currently he has 133 YouTube videos, including videos on keyboard shortcuts, quick tips, proxy media workflow, smart tools & trimming, ingesting media, and the Avid Control app. What is particularly valuable about his channel is he creates “What’s New?” videos with every release of Media Composer. These are excellent ways to catch up on the latest features. He has a Patreon channel subscription, which presumably removes the incessant YouTube ad breaks. Jack’s style is cheerful and fun, making it feel less like a classroom, and more like a pleasant information journey. He also is a frequent contributor to the Facebook Media Composer group.



### Gaijin-Eyes Tutorials

Douglas Bruce is an editor originally from Scotland but now based in Japan. The title means “foreign eyes.” The most useful series of tutorials he created were for BCC Title Studio. He shows the most basic operation of the tool, which I’ve not found anywhere else. The drawback is his delivery is, um, slow. Maddening so. So much so that I bought his series of tutorials (now on YouTube for free), and did a cut down version of each one, eliminating all the extra space. And saving me from going crazy.



### Boris FX/Boris FX Learn

Two essential visual effects plugins I insist on being installed on my workstation are Boris Continuum Complete (BCC) and Mocha Pro. BCC is constantly updated with new and very useful plugins that I use every day. The most recent include Frame Fixer ML, Jump Cut Fixer ML, and Retimer ML. Most all BCC filters have integrated a pared-down version of Mocha Pro, but I prefer to have the full featured Mocha Pro on hand. Mocha Pro is terrific at creating flawless split screens to change the timing within a shot. Boris FX has added a crazy good rotoscoping tool called the Object Brush ML, which can select an object such as a person, and track them through the entire shot, even when they’ve walked off screen.

Boris FX has two YouTube channels with extensive tutorials on all their plugins. The Boris FX channel lists 1.2K videos. The Boris FX Learn channel is newer and is focused on longform training. Even that has 831 videos. Lots to look through.

Learning your computer’s operating system can be just as valuable as your editing software. There are several sources for learning macOS and iOS.

### Brandon Butch and MacMost

When Apple releases a new OS for either the Mac or iOS, the best resources I’ve found for learning about all the new features are these two YouTube channels.



### Brandon Butch

Brandon Butch does a detailed review of every feature in a new macOS or iOS release and beta. Could be why he has some 1,922 videos posted. His reviews are well illustrated, detailed, and informative. After a while his delivery can get grating as he seems to have one tone and one speed, but the information is well worth it.



### MacMost

MacMost (YouTube: macmostvideo) has hardware reviews and software tutorials for about any Mac/iPhone and program one could imagine. Gary Rosenzweig instructs on software like Spotlight, Finder, iCloud, Numbers, Keynote, Calendar, Reminder, etc., etc. With 3,697 videos it would be hard to find something he hasn’t posted about. Other random subjects posted on include ‘Remove/Replace Background’ in Photos, ‘Zip Files on Mac,’ ‘Customize Control Center,’ and ‘Are QR Codes Safe?’



### MacSparky

David Sparks is a lawyer who decided he preferred creating learning resources for Macs over going to court and filing briefs. He has a long running tech-focused podcast called Mac Power Users. And, he has made numerous tutorials posted to YouTube. Also, he has created several online courses focusing on specific software, which he calls MacSparky Field Guides. The field guides include *Shortcuts for Mac*, *Hazel* (a Finder automation tool), *Alfred* (another automation tool), and *Apple Productivity Suite*. The one most helpful for me was the *Keyboard Maestro Field Guide*. Keyboard Maestro is the successor to QuicKeys as the premiere Mac automation tool, and this field guide opens up its secrets. It is another essential tool in all my workstations.



### ScreenCasts Online

SCO is a paid subscription to tutorials for everything iPad, iPhone, and Mac. They have several presenters (Lee Garrett, Allison Sheridan, Darcy Hegarty) that each week present two new tutorials on software and OS. They have around 1700 tutorials available on their website and through their iPhone app. These tend to be much more in depth looks at software, most running over 30 minutes long, and some more complicated subjects spanning two episodes. And these are specific to macOS, iOS, and iPadOS – and nothing on programs like Media Composer, Premiere, or Resolve.



### Thomas Boykin

This YouTube channel is more for sound editors and mixers but has a lot of great general information about film sound, how to record it, edit it, and mix it. Included as well are software reviews on plugins, and

some practical tips on working with clients.

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## It Sure Is Bad Out There...

*The Wall Street Journal* published statistics on the collapse of the film business in Los Angeles (*How Hollywood's Job Market Is Collapsing*, Mar 30, 2026). And the stats are really bad: "A nationwide downturn in U.S. film and TV production caused a 30% employment drop from late-2022." As many as 42,000 jobs have been lost from 2024 until now, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (nofilmschool.com).

There are multiple complementary reasons for these losses. First, the peak-TV of the 2020s has drastically shrunk as studios realize not everyone wants another streaming service. Overall, Hollywood is simply making fewer movies and television shows. The WGA and SAG strikes in 2022-2023 didn't help employment. The IATSE contract talks that followed likely didn't help. And productions are increasingly chasing tax incentives in different states and different countries. That's nothing new, but it has gotten worse. Georgia, for example, has tax incentives that have attracted a lot of production. But Marvel


Studios, for example, left for the more generous UK subsidies. I've heard Georgia is just as dead as Los Angeles.

I recently budgeted a low budget feature for post in Australia. First, there was a favorable exchange rate, where the money goes about 15% farther. Then, the tax incentives can reach up to 40% payback on every dollar spent. Crazy.

Some additional stats from the *Wall Street Journal* article: Production starts for live action film/TV with a budget over \$40 million went from 251 in 2021 to 159 in 2025. Days of on-location activity, including photo shoots, student films, online content, and industry videos, in L.A. went from 18,560 in 2021 to 6,582 today.

The human cost of this job loss is horrendous. I read all the time in the Facebook MPEG group of people who need hours to qualify for benefits, or who have long fallen out of the job market. It is terribly sad.

As of this writing, Senator Adam Schiff is working to create a tax incentive to keep more production in the U.S. In California, Assemblymember Nick Schultz authored California post-production tax credit bill AB 2319, which is sponsored by the California Post Alliance. The MPEG Political Engagement Committee initiated a letter-writing campaign to the Assembly in support of the bill. Some 3200 members responded.

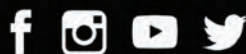
As a co-chair of the Emerging Technology Committee for the Editors Guild, which has studied the possible impacts of AI on future employment, I've come to wonder why worry about AI. It seems we're doing a pretty bang up job of losing work on our own. To quote Fredo: "I think I'll get a real drink." 

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## 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 Eric L. Beason, ACE.*

**T**he twinkling, star-filled sky was set against a deep-space bed of black as the moon was nowhere in sight. Beneath that sky, Robert Redford's assistant, Robbie, was accompanying me as I followed a pick-up truck that carried the flaccid hot air balloon and its wicker basket along I-25 taking us south from Santa Fe, where we were part of the filming of *The Milagro Beanfield War*.

As the horizon began to glow a deep magenta, we pulled into a field northwest of Albuquerque where we spread out the rip-stop nylon and attached the gondola. Our captain lit the pilot flame in the burner and opened the main blast valve, sending heated air through the mouth of the balloon causing the fabric to ripple. Then the sky bloomed with splashes of yellow and orange. Our captain opened the valve some more and the jet stream roared to life bringing about a billowing of the fabric as it snapped into shape. Robbie and I joined our captain in the gondola, ropes were dropped and we began our ascent.

We were airborne, drifting upward and away. My attention was still on the receding launch site where crew were gathering up the ropes and preparing to follow us across the grounds, as we coasted along air currents.

The sky was full of magical light in New Mexico. And it was that light that Redford fought with the studio to get. Of course, they wanted him to shoot in Los Angeles on the studio lot. If it was strictly a fiduciary concern we most certainly would have. But everyone benefited from his success in getting to take the production to New Mexico.

Virtually every day someone in the cutting room would yell out "Sky alert!" and we'd drop what we were doing and step outside to witness yet another example of one of nature's glories. Rolling cumulus clouds bathed in that magical light or rainbows, often double or even triple tiered. Sometimes a distant corner of the mesa would be darkened with a gathering storm, majestic on its own with bolts of lightning but against the desert and mountain backdrop ... jaw dropping.

One day I was asked by Redford to fly to Sundance to assess the feasibility of posting there. While I was game, I was skeptical of getting back in time for dailies. "Sure you can," he said with a slight nod. "I've done it many times" he added, cracking that winning smile of his.

The next morning at dawn, I was picked up by a Teamster and instead of driving me to Albuquerque International Airport, he took me to a small regional airport outside of Santa Fe where we drove onto the runway and right up to a purring Learjet. There I was greeted by one of the pilots who told me that he was ready if I was and that I could have my pick of any of the eight available seats as I was the only passenger. And yes, I was waiting when Redford and crew arrived to dailies that evening.

Being on time was not one of Redford's strengths. While we were in the middle of the director's cut at Sundance, a recording session at Brigham Young University's facility had been booked, but the time to depart the cutting room to make the deadline had gone. I'd already suggested leaving a couple of times earlier and so thought it prudent to offer to cancel it, facetiously adding, "As the only way we could possibly make it would be to take a helicopter!"

Redford's eyes lit up. "Great idea!" he declared and sprang into action. He grabbed the phone, gave some instructions and I kid you not, 15 minutes later a helicopter was setting down outside of the theater. "Eric?" he asked, "Have you ever ridden in a helicopter?"

I hadn't. "Well then," he said, "let this be the first," and his eyes twinkled. "You'll be riding shotgun, next to the pilot!"

The Bell 47G is one big glass fishbowl where I could see past my feet and follow the terrain as we rose, ascending along the ski run just a few feet above the snow. I was feeling good as it was smooth sailing and Redford wore a smile, seeming genuinely happy for me.

But then we crested the mountain and were met with a wall of wind that buffeted us sideways, tipping the craft slightly and looking past my feet I could see the sheer drop of a couple thousand feet. The helicopter lurched left and right as a million butterflies flapped their wings in my stomach. The pilot made some adjustments and the helicopter settled back down. We soared away from the Wasatch Mountains and made our session at the BYU campus with minutes to spare.

Technology has facilitated the interfacing of director and editor when separated by distances both great and small. But something intangible is lost with the lack of eye-to-eye contact, the sharing of space in a room, and the breathing of the same air.

While working on location, one can feel the loss of contact of one's friends and family but there is also the possible view of seeing it as an adventure to be embraced. **CE**

PRIMETIME EMMY® AWARD-WINNING EDITOR  
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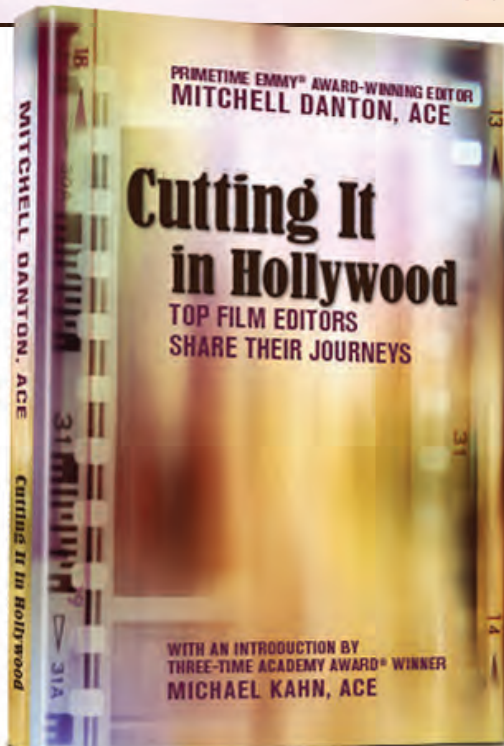
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INTRODUCTION BY THREE-TIME ACADEMY AWARD® WINNER  
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# Beef

## Laura Zempel, ACE, and Lauren Connelly, ACE, start a new feud for season 2 of Netflix's anthology series

BY CAROLYN GIARDINA

In season 2 of Netflix's anthology series *Beef*, a new feud begins when a young couple witness (and record on cell phone) a disturbing fight between their boss Josh, played by Oscar Isaac, and his wife Lindsay, played by Carey Mulligan. Josh is the general manager of an upscale country club owned by billionaire Chairwoman Park (Youn Yuh-jung) and the young couple, Austin and Ashley, are played by Charles Melton and Cailee Spaeny.

Laura Zempel, ACE, returned for the second season of showrunner Lee Sung Jin's limited series joined by Lauren Connelly, ACE. The pair cut four episodes apiece with Zempel editing episodes 1, 4, 5, and 8 while Connelly took episodes 2, 3, 6, and 7. (Lee Sung Jin, Jake Schreier, and Kitao Sakurai shared directing duties.) "I just felt like we were a team immediately," says Connelly. "All of the season was crossboarded, so we didn't have our directors and showrunner with us until everything was shot, besides small meetings here or there. And so we would screen things for each other. We would show each other episodes. We were in constant communication the entire time."

That communication and teamwork was critical, working with an ensemble cast for which each character required exposition and had to stay active in the story. "A lot of that was set up in the script and the pilot has that really long, really intense cold open where we're learning about the two couples, and they're sort of like two trains heading towards each other, about to collide," says Zempel.

"I think the main thing in terms of introducing our two sets of couples was making it feel exciting, because in comparison with season 1 – which started with the car chase, so there's an inciting incident that happens really quickly – this season is a little bit of a slower burn," she continues. "But we didn't want it to feel that way. We wanted it to still feel exciting and have a lot of drive and have the beef be established as quickly as possible."

The audience gets to know these characters in the first episode as Zempel propels the story toward the beef, but a great deal of exposition was also created by Connelly in episode 2. "We had to get a lot of information out in the second episode and really get to know all of these characters and what they were going through," she says. "One thing that we found in the edit – which I found in a lot of shows with big ensembles – is sometimes when you're intercutting the different characters, it reads really exciting. [But in editorial] sometimes it is really exciting, and then sometimes you'd actually rather stick with a character or storyline for a couple scenes in a row."

To that end, she relates that she did some restructuring in episode 2 so that you could stick with the characters longer [in order to] get a little more emotionally invested.

Episode 2 also included taking some dailies intended for episode 1. Zempel cites one such example: "The scene of Josh on the phone with his sister was originally scripted and shot for the pilot, but it kind of slowed down the episode a little bit. We were a little Josh heavy, and that scene didn't really add much to the pilot. But then when we put it in episode 2, it helped establish the money trouble storyline that was more fleshed out in episode 2."

Zempel shares a favorite scene from episode 1, during which Josh approaches Ashley on the club's golf course, the day after she recorded the fight on her phone. "There's so much subtext going on, and you get to watch Josh try a few different tactics," she says. "We're a little wider on both of them for the early part of the scene as they're doing the pleasantries. It takes her a little too long to figure out what he's doing. And so finding her reactions, where she's scared but not getting it, was really fun," she adds, noting that when Ashley starts to realize that the job is being threatened, "we're much closer on both of their faces. Figuring out who to have on camera was so much fun. [Cailee's] reactions were so good."

And Isaac, she continues, "does a lot of little idiosyncrasies with his face in between lines, and at first I was cutting too much, and I was losing a lot of his expressions and eyebrows and mouth things and little body shifts. I found if I held on him for a little bit longer, it became a little scarier."

Long takes proved effective in the storytelling. Take for instance episode 8's pivotal sequence during which Austin is in the back of a taxi, having chosen to break things off with Ashley and pursue a relationship with Eunice (Seoyeon Jang). Here, a single-take stays on a close-up of his face as he processes his decision and ultimately changes his mind.

Zempel gives a lot of credit to the episode's director. "Going through the dailies, it was very clear that Jake wanted this whole moment to play on Charles' face, which is wonderful because that's what I like as well," she says. "Charles is a wonderful actor, and we are able to hold on his face as he processes thinking

he got what he wanted and then asking himself, is that what I really wanted? Is this the right thing for me? Maybe it's not. Wait, I think I'm making a horrible mistake. I'm actually going to change my mind. Doing all of that in one take with the camera slowly pushing in on him with that music that's in there. It's a crucial moment."

This conflict built throughout the season, and there's a turning point in episode 7 during which Austin admits to Eunice that he loves her. "You see on her face her hesitation, and we can't quite tell why is she hesitating," Connelly explains. "We wanted to leave some of those questions. ... You start to see a bit of a disconnect there, and we're not sure how this is going to play out."

She cites another scene, from episode 3, during which Austin, Ashley, and Eunice have an uncomfortable lunch in a Chinese restaurant. Noting that the directors are often "specific on who the perspective character is in a scene," Connelly relates, "they'll often shoot that character with clean coverage and then other characters with dirty coverage. The interesting thing when I got the footage for this scene is that they shot everyone dirty, everyone clean."

"So you really could cut this scene in an infinite number of ways. The scene starts as Austin's scene. You start really tight on his face, and you pull out and you see he's between these two women," she continues. "Deciding when to change that scene from his perspective to Ashley's was the thing – she catches on that something is up here, and that's when I chose to go into the clean coverage on Ashley. ... It's really her scene at that point, of her watching what's transpiring between Austin and Eunice and starting to get suspicious. And so much of that scene happens in the pauses and the looks between each other."

"I would say people would probably be surprised to hear what a heavy VFX show *Beef* is. And so there's a lot of fun things that we did in that scene with looks and stealing things ... multiple level splits, eye replacements, set replacements, tons of fluid morphs. You name it. We did it."

The series also involved a lot of ADR, as well as some cutting of Korean language dialogue, so they relied heavily on Avid's ScriptSync. "Sung Lee likes to go line by line and listen to every single take, and we do a lot of vocal replacements," she continues. "And then, honestly, the only Avid plugin I kind of can't live without anymore is Isotope, which just cleans up audio." The pair note that this was particularly useful on location exteriors when they were fighting traffic noise.



Laura Zempel, ACE




Lauren Connelly, ACE



The pair gives a shoutout to the editorial team, including Zempel's assistant editors Lilly Wild and Abby Boyle, Connelly's assistant editor Josh Stein, VFX assistant editors Melissa Kan and Yale Kozinski, VFX PA/Korean translation assistant editor Lynn Hong, music editor Luke Dennis, supervising sound editor Chris Gomez, dialogue mixer Penny Harold, and special effects mixer Andy Lange. And, post producer Reuben Lim, post supervisor Jason Tobias, post coordinator Leah Henry, and post PAs Anna Reynoso and Alaina Oatts.

Reflecting on the season, Connelly feels that these characters are relatable "Maybe not the exact things that happen, but I think a lot of people can relate to the emotions and the difficult choices that they're all making, and the regrets about relationships."

Season 2 concludes with a flash forward, showing the characters, eight years later. According to Zempel, there was some debate: Should Josh and Lindsay end up together after Josh is released from prison? "The scripts went through different versions," she says. "Early versions leaned into them maybe getting back together," she relates. "And then when we got the footage, Lindsay clearly has a new husband and a daughter, and made it very clear that she would not end up with Josh."

She adds that the performances gave this an authenticity. "Maybe Josh and Lindsay don't end up together, but wonder if they could have – and still have fondness for each other," she says. "I think, in a way, that's sort of more sweet and tender than if they had ended up together. And then, seeing the younger couple follow in their footsteps. It's so fun to imagine what's going to happen to them. And then we have Chairwoman Park at the grave, reflecting on everything, and then, the drone shot, just showing the cycles that we're all trapped in. I think it's a very satisfying ending." 



# Paradise

**“The show’s power lies in its blend of human drama and apocalyptic scale,” explains Julia Grove, ACE**

BY ADRIAN PENNINGTON

**W**hen Hulu’s sci-fi drama *Paradise* returned for its second season, it did so with a creative gamble that delayed resolution of the season 1 cliffhanger until the very final moments. Instead, the S2 premiere episode, “Graceland,” drops viewers into a pre- then post-apocalyptic America, set in Elvis’ Memphis home, with a new character and a story that unfolds far from the bunker audiences had come to know.

“The writers spent a long time debating whether opening season 2 with what is essentially a standalone episode was the right move,” says Julia Grove, ACE, who cut the episode as well as episodes 204 and 207. Romina Rey was Grove’s assistant on seasons 1 and 2 and also co-edited 204 and 207. Howard Leder cut 202, 205, and 208 assisted by Samuel Bellamy. Lai-San Ho edited 203 and 206 assisted by Stacy Pietrafitta who co-edited 206.

Even as production began, the creative team continued to question whether the structure of the standalone first episode would land. But once Grove and her team saw Shailene Woodley’s performance as survivor Annie, the uncertainty evaporated.

“Once we watched what she delivered, it became clear the episode could absolutely carry the weight of opening the season,” she says. “It grounded everything. There was no doubt anymore. Starting the season this way felt bold, but also right.”

*Paradise* is created by Dan Fogelman and is set amid the aftermath of a climate catastrophe which wiped out most of the planet’s population except for a select few thousand living in a secretive underground city in Colorado. Sterling K. Brown plays key protagonist Xavier, once President Bradford’s (James Marsden) bodyguard and now a rebel against the city authorities led by Sinatra (Julianne Nicholson) and on a mission to find his wife Teri (Erika Okuma) outside the bunker. Season 1 was nominated for four Emmys including for Brown, Nicholson, Marsden, and best drama.

## Finding the Emotional Anchor

For Grove, the pivotal moment in “Graceland” was the sequence in which Annie finds herself on the day of the climate disaster, hearing the President’s address to the nation.

“We knew that if we could get to that scene within the first 10 minutes it would give viewers an anchor point before watching the horrors that unfold around her.”

The first cut of the episode ran 93 minutes and the challenge became how to condense a story spanning years without losing its emotional texture. Much of the survival montage work was trimmed, and some early scenes with young Annie and her sickly mother were reshaped or removed entirely.

“As an editor, your task is to condense but still convey what you need,” says Grove, who got her career break assisting Sean Albertson, ACE, on Sylvester Stallone’s *Rocky Balboa*. “We had to get across the conflict with her mother, the symbolism of the chair, her fear of becoming a person who is essentially disabled – all in maybe a minute.”

The episode’s most delicate arc is Annie’s evolving relationship with Link (Thomas Doherty), one of a group of survivors who invade her sanctuary. Grove admits she initially resisted the idea that Annie would trust him particularly given his violent early conduct toward her.

“As a female, I was like, okay, I feel like the writing might be on the wall here,” she laughs. “We know that she’s a strong woman who has survived for two years on her own. What would make her trust this man?”

The answer lay in restraint. A long balcony conversation between the two characters was originally covered in close-ups, but in using this coverage Grove felt that their intimacy was earned too quickly.

“The take we ended up using was a wide shot – the first take, actually,” she says. “There’s this empty chair between them, dead center in the frame. It let their intimacy build slowly and subtly.”

By the time the pair reach their emotional breaking point in the Jungle Room (Elvis’ bedroom) the audience has traveled the same path Annie has. “You hope viewers feel they can let their guard down with him, just like she does,” Grove says.

## Editing Across Time and Timelines

*Paradise* is structurally complex, with storylines unfolding across multiple timelines and locations. Footage for flashbacks often arrives weeks apart, and different editors handle different blocks.

Yet Grove says the process is surprisingly fluid. “Everything is shot nonlinearly anyway,” she explains. “You just wait to plug in the footage.” For consistency, it helps that Yasu Tanida has been the director of photography across all 16 episodes to date.

Episode 204, “A Holy Charge,” which jumps between Annie and Xavier on the road and an earlier timeline inside the bunker, was particularly demanding.

“I was pretty backlogged in dailies because 201 was so long,” she says. “But that meant I could cut the birthing montage and Annie’s subsequent death at the same time, and start intercutting them in a more artful way.”

### The Ticking Clock Finale

If 201 was lyrical and introspective, 207 “The Final Countdown” was its polar opposite: a propulsive, multithreaded thriller that tees up the season finale. “Everything is coming to a head,” Grove says. “It’s where all the story arcs converge.”

Coediting with Rey, Grove focused on maintaining tension across multiple storylines, including a sniper standoff between Xavier, Teri, and Gary (a survivor with romantic feelings for Teri, played by Cameron Britton). “We truncated the first part of that sequence because we never wanted to leave a storyline hanging too long,” she explains. “It added more tension.”

Watching the episode with an audience confirmed the choices. “People were literally rooting for Gary to get shot,” she laughs. “It was wild.”

The resolution of this scene, as a deescalation rather than a bloodbath, reflects the show’s ethos. Grove says, “The more action movie version would be that someone gets shot. But *Paradise* is about humanity. You hope there are still good people out there.”



“  
People were literally rooting for Gary to get shot,” she laughs. “It was wild.”

For Grove, the show’s power lies in balancing the intimate with the infinite. “There are a lot of big budget VFX shows out there,” she says. “What sets *Paradise* apart is that Dan [Fogelman] is always more concerned with what’s going on with the actor. You don’t need to see the explosions or thousands of people storming a bunker. It’s about what the character is feeling.”

She points to *Lost* as a tonal reference – a plot-driven show that paused to “peel the onion” through character-centric flashbacks. “I remember thinking that was so novel,” she says. “We really honed that approach.”


The team of editors, along with directors Glenn Ficarra, John Requa and Ken Olin all are alumni of *This Is Us*, the family drama created by Fogelman that ran six seasons on NBC 2016-22.

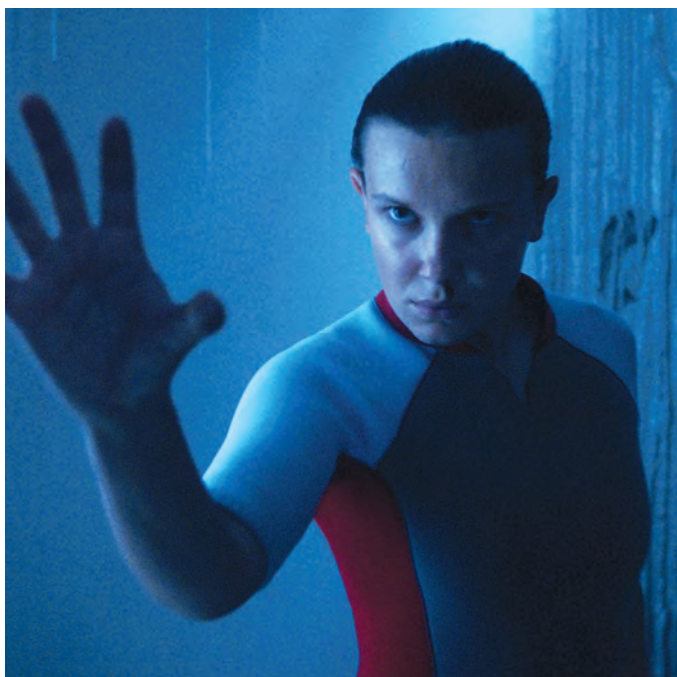
“He loves what he’s creating,” says Grove. “I’ve been on shows where that isn’t the case, and you feel it. He’ll tell you how he wants a scene to feel, not micromanage shot choices. Once he trusts you, he lets you do your thing.” That freedom has allowed Grove to experiment, especially with montages and intercutting. “I’ll say, ‘Can I take a stab at doing my own thing?’ and he’s like, ‘Sure.’ It’s a great creative relationship.”

Most days editorial worked from home with the opportunity of an edit bay on the Paramount lot. “Directors who were able to would come into the bay and work with us for four days then we’d send the cut to Dan. Dan would send back notes, and then [the editors] would continue working with the director for a couple more days to address that first pass.”

For every episode, the editorial team are able to send assembled sequences to the music team early on. She explains, “Sid Khosla, our composer, and Chris Foster, our music editor, work hand-in-hand with us at the editor’s cut stage to create fully-arranged pieces by the time Dan is seeing the cut for the first time. Having that score locked in so early really helps me hone and maintain the rhythm of my picture edits as the cut evolves from editor’s cut to lock.”

Planned as a three season arc, the *Paradise* team is already prepping for the final season, which promises to loop in further flashbacks as time travel enters the equation.

“I don’t dive into the online fan forums as much as others, but it is fun – especially now that it’s clear we’re introducing some sort of quantum entanglement – to see what crazy theories pop up.” 



# Stranger Things

Dean Zimmerman, ACE, guides the tangled universe of the Duffer Bros' sci-fi horror hit to satisfying conclusion

BY WALTER FERNANDEZ

**A**fter nearly a decade, the cultural phenomenon that was and is *Stranger Things* concluded on New Year's Eve 2025. The final season's staggered release on Netflix culminated with the finale's two day theatrical release earning over \$25 million at the box office. Dean Zimmerman, ACE, was there from the very beginning. He edited the pilot, "The Vanishing of Will Byers," for which he earned an Emmy for Outstanding Single-Camera Picture Editing for a Drama Series. He also snagged an ACE Eddie nomination for this episode and two further Emmy nominations in 2020 and 2022 as part of a 25 episode haul over five seasons. On the last two seasons he was supervising editor.

Zimmerman was able to help forge the tone and feel of the Duffer Brothers' sci-fi horror that carried over throughout its entire run. Even in the second season when he was off working on other projects, the spirit of what was created in season 1 was still there. The slick post-modern vibe that incorporated arcades, Dungeons & Dragons, short shorts, big hair, and mall culture struck an '80s-nostalgic chord. *Stranger Things* does feel like the progeny of *The Goonies* and *Super 8*.

It was prolific director-producer Shawn Levy who wanted Zimmerman on the project. The pair had worked together many times throughout the years on movies like *Date Night* and the *Night at the Museum* franchise. Levy was executive producing *Stranger Things*, and it was crewing up fast. Zimmerman recalls,

"I got a call from Shawn's old assistant, Rand Geiger, who became the post producer of *Stranger Things*. Rand said, 'Shawn just gave me this script. He's doing this series called *Montauk*,' ultimately *Stranger Things*. 'There are these twin writers Matt and Ross Duffer. Would you ever think about doing TV?'"

Zimmerman continues, "I had done a couple of pilots for Shawn before, so I've been in the TV world. Rand said, 'Netflix would love for you to come in just because you're a big feature guy and can help develop their pipeline.' So, I read it and thought, 'Wow, this is amazing.' It was just very nostalgic. It kind of hit all the movies I grew up with that inspired me to get into this business."

When Zimmerman met the Duffers, he already possessed a special cheat code that made the meeting feel familiar. He explains, "Not only did I know exactly who was whom, I knew which one was older, which one more alpha than the other because I'm an identical twin, as well. It was a weird twinship, if you will. That just bonded us immediately. I said, 'I'd love to do it. And they said, 'Are you kidding? We would kill for you to do it. It was a match made in heaven.'" Fun fact: Zimmerman's identical twin, Dan, is also an accomplished ACE editor (*The Maze Runner*).

Zimmerman's impact on the series was evident early on. "There was a dinner table scene in episode 1," he recalls. "We're at the Wheelers. Will's been taken. Mike wants to go find him. Nancy wants to go meet up with Steve, but Hopper imposed a curfew on the town. Their parents put their foot down. Everyone argues. Holly is sitting in the highchair eating pancakes. [The Duffers] shot a couple takes of her eating and looking around at everyone. It was a very serious scene on the page. I thought, 'I'm gonna cut this from her POV looking at all these guys like they're nuts. I just wanna eat my pancakes.' That's what was going on in my brain. I showed the Duffers and they just freaked out and said, 'We have to put more comedy into this series.' They went back and rewrote every episode to inject more comedy."

He continues, "I've been working with Shawn Levy for 25 years. If you see my credits, it's mostly family comedy. I'm not a genre guy, and I'm definitely not a horror guy. For me, this was such a departure, but what that enabled me to do was inject humor that it needed to balance the serious, heavy genre stuff."

"The Duffers created a creative safe space where you can always try something new or different. You're never gonna be in a spot where you're ridiculed. It may not work, but it's not a bad idea. When you create a space where you don't have that fear of failing, where you just get to try as much as you want, as long as you want, good things happen."

Regarding the collaborative atmosphere during the edit, Zimmerman shares, "The Duffer Brothers love editing. They are there at 9 a.m. and they do not leave till 7.30 p.m. It is their favorite process because that's where they get to really mold the clay into the art. They're that way with everything: music, sound effects; it all has to be absolutely perfect. Once we were done with cutting a scene and it was exactly how they wanted it, the music and sound, they never went back. It was locked and not to be changed."

"Netflix has been so supportive, too," explains Zimmerman. "We would get notes from them which we would consider but

99% of [the Duffers'] edit is what has been delivered. That not only speaks to how strong the scripts are, but to how they work.”

In terms of establishing the pipeline, Zimmerman suggested to Netflix that they do all the finish work at the end once the episodes were cut. “Normally in TV, you’d cut an episode, finish it, mix and color correct it, and then it’s done. But what if episode 8 informs something that you wanna change in episode 1?”

“The way we set up was that if we needed to make changes in the beginning, it wasn’t a big deal. Netflix allowed us the time to do that. The way Netflix was releasing back then was all at once – so why not have maximum creative flexibility to change things all the way up to the very end. We could put a line here that would deliver another line better there, or we can add a payback or a runner.”

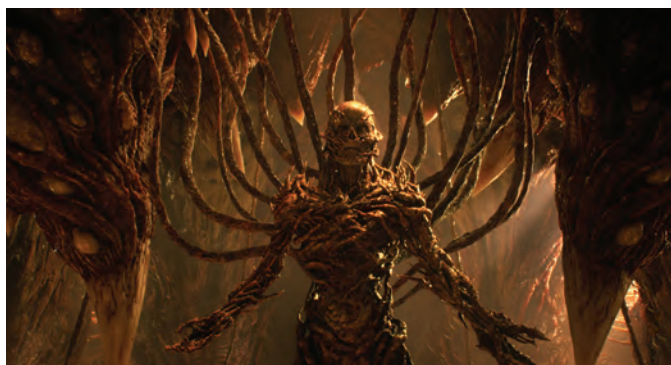
Despite his feature-film pedigree, the scale of the production still amazed Zimmerman. “It was bigger than any feature I’ve ever done. I think we had 8,000 VFX shots. Our VFX team was absolutely stellar. Lots of previs. Designing every single shot and having to cut. We really treated it as one big movie.”

The editors didn’t have much fat to trim from the production. “There was only one scene that was cut out of a script, but it was re-shot because we wanted to do it a different way,” reveals Zimmerman. “That was in S1. I’m not sure about season 2, but every single scene they wrote is in the series. I’ve never experienced that in 30+ years that I’ve been in this business.”

Without having to slough through unnecessary scenes, the editors could focus on the storytelling. He divulges, “Some of the most difficult stuff is the intercutting. How long are we in the scene? Where do we break? Finding that ‘pace narrative’ was key. That’s a term that I coined because if you’re away from someone too long, you forget what they’re doing and then you have to figure out how to make the audience re-engage.”

Zimmerman continues, “That’s why I feel you need to look at the global. You can make a singular scene amazing, but if you have a hundred awesome scenes, they may all suck when they’re together. Sometimes, you have to make awesome scenes short enough to work within the awesome series or the awesome episode. That was where we spent a lot of our time narratively. Pace and performance were at the forefront of everything. On occasion, we would sacrifice either the look or [quality of the] edit to get that performance that we want for the greater good.”

Scenes were often tweaked on episodes *The Duffers* didn’t direct. “They are so specific when they get guest directors, they’ll sometimes ask, ‘Do we have that?’ And I say, ‘We can make that, but we can either punch in or reverse this.’ On season 5, we do lots of fluid morphs and speedups. We also use aspect screens to combine two different performances from two different takes into one.”




Fortunately for Zimmerman, he had a skilled editorial department to assist with techniques and weaving multiple storylines together. “I love to encourage and harness the next generation of picture editors whether it’s TV or features,” he says. “I really love my assistants and bring them up.”

Katheryn Naranjo was one of Zimmerman’s assistants who then became an editor on the series beginning in S2 and cutting episodes 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the final season. Another of his assistants, Casey Cichocki, who started out as PA on S1, was Emmy-nominated with Zimmerman on S4 episode “Dear Billy” in 2022. Cichocki cut episodes 1, 2, 3, and 8 of S5.

“As the supervising editor I want to foster a free flowing, creative environment where people feel safe to make mistakes. I want you to make mistakes. That’s how you learn.”

Zimmerman confides, “I’m not saying that I know it all because they teach me more than I teach them sometimes. I know my weaknesses in certain areas, and I’m able to spot some talents in others. On S1, Kat Naranjo started making all these crazy sounds and I said, ‘You have a superpower. You should really lean into it.’ And that became the foundation of what the soundscape is for *Stranger Things*. It was because of her.” She, too, received an Emmy nod for her work in season 3.

*Stranger Things* lives online as much as on Netflix by a legion of fans steeped in the lore that the Duffers created. Zimmerman is a keen follower on YouTube.

“Those reaction videos are how I relax. I don’t care if they’re an hour or two long. I watch them all. I’ve seen a scene a million times, then you watch someone experiencing it for the first time in real time just start bawling or cheering. The greatest pleasure is knowing you were a small part of something that impacts people’s lives. For me, I just get overwhelmed with tons of emotions. I’m so thankful and grateful to be able to do what I do.” 



## The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins

Kyle Gilman precision cuts the rapid-fire jokes and “fake realism” of NBC’s sports mockumentary

BY ADRIAN PENNINGTON

**K**yle Gilman started working with Tina Fey’s production company, Little Stranger, on the last season of *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* and has edited on almost all its shows since including *Girls5eva* and *The Four Seasons*.

“I’ve been working with them almost exclusively since 2018,” Gilman reports. “We had a great experience making the interactive *Kimmy Schmidt* movie (*Kimmy vs the Reverend*, 2020) for Netflix.”

So when Robert Carlock and Sam Means, collaborators with Fey on *30 Rock*, *Unbreakable*, and the animated comedy *Mulligan*, were doing the pilot of a new sitcom, Gilman was the obvious choice to cut it.

“We’d never actually done a pilot together before. *Mr. Mayor* went straight to series on NBC (and ran for two seasons), while others such as *Girls5eva* were for streaming (on Peacock and Netflix),” he says.

“*Reggie Dinkins* was a very old-fashioned broadcast network pilot experience. We were working weekends for a month to get it ready for the upfronts. It felt like TV from another era, compared to today’s straight-to-series streaming world.

*The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins* is produced by Fey with Bevel Gears, 3 Arts Entertainment, and Universal Television. It stars *SNL* alumni and *30 Rock* comedian Tracy Morgan (also an executive producer on the project) as a retired football player plotting to rehabilitate his public image and personal life by having a filmmaker, played by Daniel Radcliffe, document his life at home.

“Robert and Sam write for Tracy’s voice so well,” he says. “You can hear him saying every line. As a *30 Rock* fan, getting to cut jokes for [Morgan] was incredibly exciting.”

While mockdocs have become a staple of network comedy, *Reggie Dinkins* twists the form: The documentary is being made by filmmaker Arthur Tobin (Radcliffe) who appears on camera, reacts, and even argues with the subjects he’s filming.

“That opens up so many opportunities for jokes but also real editorial challenges,” Gilman relates. “They wanted it to feel like Arthur genuinely made it with two cameras, no multiple takes, a kind of ‘fake realism.’ Then you’re combining that with their rapid-fire joke writing. Those two things don’t naturally fit together.”

It reminded Gilman of the college films he made as part of his degree in visual & environmental studies from Harvard. “I was obsessed by fake documentaries in college. I called them ‘fictumentaries’ because I thought ‘mocking’ was a reductive way of thinking about the genre. Now I think ‘mock’ is clearly referring to the other meaning of mock: not real or authentic,” he says, noting that he even researched the genre at Harvard in preparation for his thesis film. “I was very strict about the idea that the fictional filmmaker had to be able to make the film ‘for real,’ with no multiple setups or takes.” The conceit reached its high water mark in Rob Reiner’s *This Is Spinal Tap* where the director played Marty DiBergi. “Absolutely,” Gilman agrees. “*Spinal Tap* is a big format comparison.”

The pilot was directed by Rhys Thomas, the co-creator of IFC’s parody series *Documentary Now!* “Rhys is brilliant at establishing the rules of a documentary and sticking to them,” Gilman says. “That grammar carried forward, even when the schedule got tight.

“We were balancing two competing things: the nonnegotiable rapid-fire joke writing, and the documentary style, where it doesn’t always make sense to cut on every line. In their other shows, you’re pingponging between singles constantly. Here, minimizing cuts helps sell the documentary reality.”

That was easier in the first cut of the pilot, which was around 37 minutes. Getting it down to 21:18 for broadcast meant making tradeoffs including trimming the opening montage introducing Reggie with archival footage.

The production shot with two cameras and plenty of takes but almost no improvisation. “People assume shows like this involve improv, but they really don’t,” Gilman explains. “Writers might be on set to pitch alternate lines, but that’s it. The challenge is getting these extremely fast lines delivered cleanly, with the camera in the right place.”

Sometimes, though, the editorial team embraced imperfection. “We did things we’d never normally do such as letting the camera miss the action a bit,” he says. “That was hard for operators –

they're professionals, they know someone's entering from the left, so they want to pan early. But some of my favorite moments are when the camera catches the start of a line midpan, slightly sloppy, then settles. It feels real."

And occasionally, a mysterious third camera angle would appear. "If anyone were keeping track, they'd wonder where it came from," he laughs. "But you have to prioritize the jokes. If a third angle makes the joke better, you use it."

Gilman cut the pilot and episode 3 before leaving to resume his commitment to season 2 of Netflix's *The Four Seasons*, but he watched the rest of the series as a fan. Episode 6 – an Agatha Christie-style whodunit – particularly delighted him.

"I loved that Arthur does some editing to trick everyone," he says. "Making editing part of the story is unusual." The team even created graphics for Arthur's chaotic dining room editing setup. "We leaned into making it messy," he says. "That felt right for Arthur."

Nathan Floody cut episode 6, as well as episodes 2, 4, 8, and 10. Like Gilman, Floody is a sitcom virtuoso with credits including *Inside Amy Schumer*, *The Who Was? Show* and *Girls5eva*.

Rounding out *Reggie Dinkins'* editing trio is Laura Weinberg, who edited episode 5 and also cut on episode 3 to accommodate schedules. Her credits include *Emily in Paris* and *Dying for Sex*.

Gilman worked mostly from his suite at home in Brooklyn, sometimes heading to the studio in Yonkers with Means and Carlock while they were shooting.

"The studio tested it early, then the network but everyone's worked together for 20 years, so it wasn't adversarial. It was about shaping and trimming. The script was long and the



“  
I loved that Arthur does some editing to trick everyone.”

first cut of the pilot was long. For example, a scene set in a sushi restaurant – during which all at the table yell at Reggie – was originally in the pilot. Everyone loved it, but it took too much time, so it moved to episode 3, where it actually fits thematically better."

Gilman's path into editing was driven by comedy. "I love perfecting a joke – deciding when you're on the actor, when you're on something else, how fast or slow it plays," he says. "The precision is what drew me in."

After a formative period working with indie legend Hal Hartley (*Meanwhile*, *Ned Rifle*, *My America*), Gilman returned to New York's TV post-production scene. He cut the *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee* pilot and soon became a go-to editor for high velocity, joke dense series.

"The biggest challenge is that precision. Especially in the Tina Fey universe, where the cutting is fast. You're taking air out between words to make room for the next joke. At a *Girls5eva* premiere, people were laughing so much they missed the next joke – and I realized we never leave space for laughs. We assume people are watching at home, alone, with no laugh track. It's a very different kind of comedy."

One of the hidden challenges of comedy editing is maintaining your sense of humor through endless repetition. "I've cultivated the ability to laugh at something I've seen a million times," Gilman says. "I make a point of laughing out loud when something's funny. It sounds mechanical, but it keeps you connected to the material."

"On the pilot, we went through reshoots and refined it again, so staying aware of what's funny and what isn't took effort. Ultimately, your job is to have taste. To say, 'This one's better. This one's not as good.' Beyond the mechanical assembly, that's what you're there for."

Working on *Reggie Dinkins* inspired Gilman to revisit his student 'fictumentaries,' even getting them remastered from 16mm and color correcting them in [Blackmagic's DaVinci] Resolve.

"After all the remastering was finished, I had to do the thing I dreaded most in the whole process: actually watch these very personal, very embarrassing movies," Gilman relays. "I managed to get through them, but I had to watch a few scenes through my fingers because it was so awkward. I can say with the benefit of 20 years of professional editing experience that they are way too long, but also there are a few good jokes that are built on solid editing."





# The Traitors

Veteran reality TV editors remain faithful to authentic moments while dangling red herrings in the murder mystery

BY STEVE HULLFISH, ACE

For many years, *The Traitors* has been must-see reality TV in the UK where it is produced by All3Media for the BBC. The show was adapted by All3Media in the U.S. for Peacock, and has been hosted – with camp elan – by Alan Cumming for the last five seasons. In 2025 it won five Emmys, including for Best Editing, and in 2026 received a nomination for an ACE Eddie as Best Edited Reality Series for editors Patrick Owen and James Seddon-Brown.

The series is cut by more than a dozen editors. *CinemaEditor* spoke with three of them about the latest season. All are reality show veterans: Owen, whose work includes *Britain's Got Talent* and *Love Island*; Dave Moon has edited *Gordon Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares* and *Celebrity Race Across the World* (UK); and Matthew Pratt, who has edited *The Masked Dancer UK* and *The Voice UK*.

The post crew is mostly based at Envy Post in London, but some editors also dial in remotely.

The fifth season of *The Traitors*, released in January of 2026, is cast with the heroes and villains of other reality TV series. Filmed for two weeks in a cinematic Scottish castle (a real place, in Inverness), the competition revolves around trying to discover the four ‘traitors’ among the contestants before the moles can kill off the rest of the cast of ‘faithfuls’ while they try to guess who the traitors are and banish them first.

The general format is that each morning at breakfast the cast arrives to discover who has been murdered the night before. Each potentially murdered cast member knocks on the door to the breakfast area until the missing cast member is revealed. Afterward, the remaining cast goes on a mission that adds money to the prize money pot, forms and breaks alliances, and protects some winners from being ‘murdered’ that night. Then, a roundtable is convened where the cast argues about who they should banish as a potential ‘traitor.’ Finally, as night falls, the ‘traitors’ determine which cast member they will ‘murder,’ sending them home. The strategy is to become the last one standing to collect the prize pot at the end of the season.

The editing of these elements to build tension and suspense while injecting humor and delivering satisfying game-play is the key to the show’s success. All of this is culled from footage being filmed 10 hours a day with as many as 16 cameras at a time, plus radio mics on nearly two dozen contestants.

The process of turning hundreds of hours of ‘reality’ into a finished program needs a logical beginning. “The roundtables are obviously big dramatic moments and the lead-up for most of the episode and how they’re structured, so we usually will start there at least to get a good idea of story, then work our way backwards. The roundtable gives a good focus to where to go,” according to lead editor Owen.

Moon concurs, adding, “There could be a small moment in the roundtable that if you didn’t cut it first, you might think it was insignificant, whereas if you cut the roundtable first, you find out that it was this massive crescendo that you might not have noticed or might have bypassed.”

The key is to watch and listen to everything, despite the onslaught of footage. “You’ve just got to listen to everybody and everything they’re saying,” states Owen. “That’s where you find the amazing content that you would miss if you didn’t do it like that,” agrees Moon.

All three editors discussed the feeling that the *vérité* material is “not produced” and that freedom for the contestants is what gives the show its unique flavor. Moon explains, “You get so much more rawness out of it. On other reality shows they’re not told what to say, but they might be told, ‘Go over there and have a conversation about X, Y, and Z,’ because that’s the story of the moment. On *The Traitors*, there’s none of that. It’s much more organic, but for us it’s harder to track and piece together a coherent story.”

Owen continues, “It makes our life tricky, but the end result is better because of it. The cast forget the cameras are there because they are allowed to live in this murder mystery world.”

Pratt sees that freedom as an opportunity. “Those moments of authenticity allow you to have some fun. That authenticity is what makes it different from the other reality shows we do.”

Though a lead editor takes each episode, the collaboration of the team makes delivering the show possible. “It’s a good team,” says Pratt. “We have our own WhatsApp groups and things like that, so we can always ask the group and they’ll answer you just so you have a constant story thread going through.”

An advantage of the production schedule is that the editors don’t come on until the show has completed shooting all 10

episodes, and the first episode isn't delivered to the network until all 10 episodes are cut. This allows the team to know how the season ends, and provide clues and red herrings into earlier episodes.

"There might be something that happens in a viewing of one of the final episodes – something that you might have overlooked or thought was less important in the earlier episodes – but actually it builds to some huge crescendo later," explains Moon. "You then have to think, 'That needs to be seeded much earlier' so it can have an effect on making changes to the earlier episodes."

According to Owen, "The episode itself builds but you never want to go too big, too early when it's not the biggest moment, because then it can overwhelm. Within the scenes themselves finding the looks and the silences are just as important as the big moments that people remember. It's those tiny moments of letting things breathe. So we definitely try to score and pace it as a drama, as much as possible."

"Just let it flow and create that pressure cooker," expands Pratt, "So it builds to when the votes come around that table, then the audience can go with it. If we over-edit or we're showing our hand, ultimately this is such an authentic show."

The drama is built from the reactions of the cast as they try to judge the veracity or deceitfulness of their fellow competitors. So are those reactions pulled from the actual moments of conflict, or constructed? Pratt claims, "Our coverage is pretty good. We don't really cheat anything. We're lucky enough to have a good crew that know how to pick up reactions. So we stay authentic to what's been filmed."

"There's a camera on everyone, so there's always a reaction," Owen says. "The beauty of having reality celebrities is that they're extravagant characters, so they give good reactions."



The set-pieces and vérité moments are supplemented by interviews with the cast, who often sit down multiple times a day for chats directly to camera. "They're crucial for *Traitors* because most of what they're thinking can't be said on camera. They're a great comedic tool, but also give that extra personality, and show why they're doing things and what they're thinking because it is all so cloak-and-dagger."

Moon adds, "It's really nice where you can juxtapose someone saying something in reality, but then have an interview where they're saying, 'I don't believe them.' So you get that second layer of storytelling."

The show balances melodrama, comedy, and taut suspense. "We aim for a perfect blend of high camp and drama," Owen explains, "For instance, we have these dramatic shots of Scotland and Alan doing his thing. The tonal shifts can be tricky when you're trying to show both together and take some of the most crafting throughout the episode to make sure you're getting the most from those moments."

Coming from a murder mystery tradition, it's crucial to provide clues to the audience, but also to stay ahead of them. "The audience isn't stupid," says Owen. "If you hammer things too heavily at them, it won't pay off. So, it's a very fine balance to slowly drip feed things in. You need people to have a few red herrings. There's a delicate balance of giving them enough to start making their own minds without giving the game away."

For the team, working on a show that has become such a cultural phenomenon in the UK is a big plus. "One of the rare things about *Traitors* is that everyone I speak to that works on it is a fan of the show. There's not one person that views it as just, 'Oh, I'm here to get paid, I'm here for a job.' No, they all want to watch it. I love being part of it because I love watching it. My family love it. Everyone that works on it loves it."



Dave Moon



James Seddon-Brown



Matthew Pratt



Patrick Owen



## Pluribus

Skip Macdonald, ACE, describes building the strangely warm and creepily honest world of Vince Gilligan's sci-fi comedy

BY ADRIAN PENNINGTON

**A**fter years shaping the visual and emotional rhythms of *Breaking Bad* and *Better Call Saul*, Skip Macdonald, ACE, was familiar with Vince Gilligan's tonal fingerprints but reading the pilot script for *Pluribus* was something else entirely.

"It had all of Vince's trademark tension, humor, and moral ambiguity but it's also such a departure from the previous shows we've ever done," says Macdonald of the creator and showrunner. "It's got so much information, but my question was: Where does it go? I only had the pilot episode, and it's such a standalone."

"We Is Us," the pilot episode of Gilligan's latest creation, establishes the setup for a strange kind of post-apocalyptic world in which a communication from outer space virally infects the world's population – by making them oddly nice. While virtually everyone shares a hive mind, living in a state of serene, almost eerie contentment, fantasy romance novelist Carol Sturka (played by Rhea Seehorn) appears resistant to assimilation. Her stubborn independence becomes the emotional spine of the series.

Macdonald, an Emmy and three-time Eddie Award winner for his longtime collaborator's *Breaking Bad* (and a 12-time Eddie and 11-time Emmy nominee), edited the *Pluribus* pilot and episodes 2, 4, 6, and 8. The challenge was to help define

the show's identity. "The pilot was really about getting the tone of the show, that sense of mystery – of a world that feels familiar yet fundamentally altered. We have this big setup in the pilot where we meet Carol and wife/manager Helen (Miriam Shor), then everyone around her starts behaving weirdly. The payoff at the end told you where we were heading – but we headed somewhere so different from what I expected and what I think most people expected."

Gilligan did offer some clues. "It was kind of a mixture of *The X-Files* and *The Twilight Zone*," Macdonald says. "But *Pluribus* is not pastiche. It's warmer and stranger than either reference suggests."

It's notably funnier than *Breaking Bad* or *Better Call Saul* too but retains the unsettling chill of those shows. Macdonald nods, "A lot of that came across on the page – the writers deserve credit. And the actors were amazing. In the editing room, it was about trying things and adjusting to make those moments hit, making sure nothing felt too far one way or the other."

He elaborates, "It took a little while in the early episodes to get our footing and figure out what that balance was and how to achieve it. In the pilot we establish that everybody's happy – apart from Carol – and nobody wants to harm anybody. The aftermath of the world changing event is not people trying to rob and steal to survive. It's not zombies. It's more: 'What would you like?' and 'How can we help?' That's such a change from what you normally see."

One central discussion among the team was how the hive mind should be portrayed. "Sometimes actors had big grins – and we'd say, 'No, no'... They're just happy. They're not putting on a face.' We wanted pleasant looks, but not like *Smile*. Nothing pushed too far."

### A World Without Noise

The opening 12 minutes of episode 2, "Pirate Lady," are dialogue free. Since everyone knows their role and can do it so efficiently, words are redundant. It begins in Morocco and introduces us to a woman we later know as Zosia (Karolina Wydra), the 'chaperone' that the hive has selected to be Carol's companion (or guard, depending on your point of view). She helps a body out of a car, hops on a moped, heads to the airport, and pilots a jumbo jet to Albuquerque. For Macdonald, this was a chance to rethink the fundamentals of sound and rhythm.

"The visuals were great, but the soundscapes were a real challenge in the early episodes because the whole world has changed – there's no traffic, no airplanes. We had to be careful about what we could use. The opening of episode 2 shows her walking up a hill in near silence except for footsteps. We really had to work that and make sound a component of the storytelling."

This attention to sonic detail was supported by a short 'bible' created early in production. "It stated things like: We don't hear cars or see cars driving or planes flying over," he explains. "Once the world changed, those rules applied. We hear more nature sounds. If something slipped in – like a truck driving by – we'd cut around it or remove it."

## The Power of the Wide

Showrunner Gilligan's signature use of wide shots return in *Pluribus* and are used not just as spectacle, but as punctuation. "When you have an intense dialogue scene, the wide shots give the audience a break while still absorbing information," explains Macdonald. "The wide shots are so beautiful. Vince likes to stay in them as long as we can."

The editor sees them as a way to modulate tension. "I try to find places where it's not supercritical information but still important, so the audience gets that breath and something pretty to look at before continuing."

Gilligan directed the first two of the nine-part run, with Zetna Fuentes, Gordon Smith, Adam Bernstein, Gandja Monteiro, and Melissa Bernstein directing later episodes. Some, like Adam Bernstein and Smith, were familiar to the team from *Breaking Bad* or *Better Call Saul*. Others were new voices.

"It's always nice to work with a new director because you get a new look and style," Macdonald says. "I have some idea of what the show is shaping up to be, so I can help guide them into what we're looking for."

Gilligan, meanwhile, remained as collaborative as ever. "If we have a suggestion on how to make something work, he's always open to it," Macdonald says. "He'll look at everything and listen. It's a great collaboration."

## Hive Mind and Human Heart

Thematically, *Pluribus* invites interpretation. Some viewers may see the show as a commentary on the pressures of conformity, others on the value of community or even as a metaphor for the pervasiveness of AI.



The choices are big and tough," he says. "I reread the scene, get into the headspace, find the overall feel."



"I think it's more about the hive mind than AI," Macdonald says. "They're all connected, and they can portray anybody they want because they have the knowledge of people's past lives and relationships. They can trick the person who isn't part of the hive."

Carol's resistance and also her vulnerability became a key emotional thread. "She's so dead set against this. She wants the world back," he says. "But after being alone so long, (having endured isolation from 'human' contact in episode 5) she realizes she needs companionship. That draws her in."

While the hive's innate honesty and apparent incapacity to harm could look like paradise we also learn that they could run out of food and starve. "Carol discovers this and doesn't want to lose her independence or autonomy but then falls in love."

## A Masterclass in Nuance

Seehorn's performance is central to the show's emotional power. Macdonald lights up when discussing her work. "She does give you so much material," he says. "The toughest thing is the starting point – how to introduce her into the scene."

Choosing between those takes is a delicate process. "The choices are big and tough," he says. "I reread the scene, get into the headspace, find the overall feel. She is so precise and consistent that you can really cut to the rhythm of her performance."

Episode 5, "Got Milk," depicts Carol alone in her house, making videos of herself to send to the dozen others with immunity and going on an exploration into a nearby factory.

"That was a tough episode because you don't have another person's reaction to cut to. It's Carol reacting to Carol in

some instances when she's replaying video of herself on screen. You get a lot of footage and have to work through it to find the pieces with the most emotion. Then you have to pick the direction: slight reactions or something a little bigger. It's time consuming."

The series' editorial team included longtime collaborator Chris McCaleb, ACE, an assistant and then editor (a three-time Emmy and four-time Eddie nominee, who won a 2021 Eddie for *Better Call Saul*), who cut *Pluribus* episodes 3, 7, and 9 and Joey Liew, who assisted McCaleb and cut episode 5 solo.

"As scripts or outlines were finished, we'd get them. I try to stay as far ahead as I can so I know what's coming up in case anything ties together. Once we sit down with Vince, who has got everything in his head, we refine with him and get it firing on all cylinders. Occasionally, if something crossed over from one episode to the next, we'd tweak to make sure they matched."

They worked in Burbank while production shot in New Mexico, receiving footage daily. "We have one big office with separate rooms," Macdonald says. "If we need to share something, we just walk down the hall. It's really nice for collaboration."

Sterling Robertson was Macdonald's assistant across his five episodes and Nicholas Sy was second assistant on eight


episodes upgraded to first in assisting Liew on "Got Milk." "We're a well-oiled group," Macdonald says.

Though not a VFX heavy show in the traditional sense, *Pluribus* relies on subtle environmental tweaks to maintain the integrity of its world. "We have a visual effects assistant who keeps track of everything," Macdonald explains. "We lay things out, pass them off, they track vendors, and we review shots as they come in. The goal is invisibility. That's how we like it."

### **Breaking Bad Easter Eggs**

Apple TV commissioned *Pluribus* for a second season even before the pilot had aired and Macdonald is eager to return. "It was such a fun world to be part of," he says. "The storytelling is top of its game."

Since it is set amid the urban landscape and desert topography of Albuquerque, *Breaking Bad* fans will be on the alert for more callbacks such as the Wayfarer Airlines logo seen in episode 2 which references the air crash in *Breaking Bad*.

"It's always fun to see those kind of things because we're in locations that sometimes you recognize and others feel familiar so it would be nice to have little things pop up. I know the fans want that." 



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CHAD GALSTER, ACE • BROOKE RUPE  
ISHAI SETTON, ACE  
EP. 101 "PILOT"

**"POWERFUL."**

PARADE

“★★★★”

THE UPCOMING

**"STUNNING."**

VARIETY

# THE MADISON

★ *Paramount+* ★  
**FYC** ★  
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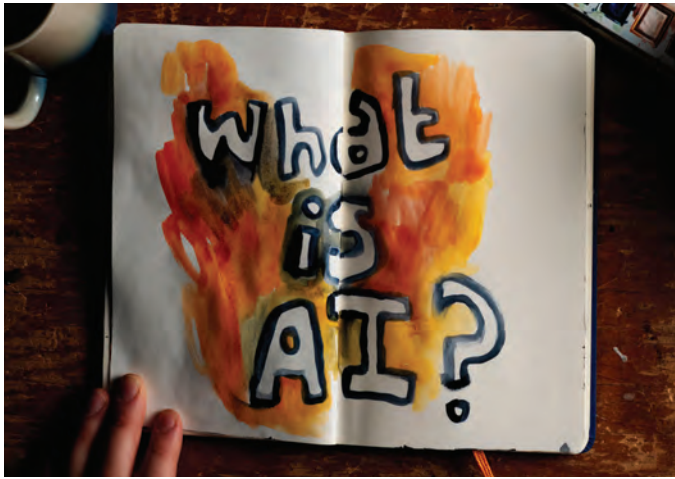
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# LANDMAN

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## **The AI Doc: Or How I Became an Apocaloptimist**

**Daysha Broadway, ACE, and  
Davis Coombe, ACE, explore the perils and  
promise of the anxiety-inducing subject**

BY CAROLYN GIARDINA

**O**ne can only imagine the weight felt by Emmy-winning editors Daysha Broadway, ACE, and Davis Coombe, ACE, as they crafted *The AI Doc: Or How I Became an Apocaloptimist*, which explores the perils and promise of the transformative – and controversial – technology.

“Initially there was no outline, but the chapters were kind of coming into form,” Broadway (*A Black Lady Sketch Show*) says of Focus Features’ March 27 release, told from the point of view of protagonist Daniel Roher (Oscar winner for 2022 documentary *Navalny*) who upon learning that he is to become a father, decides to embark on a journey to better understand AI and the sort of world that his son and the next generation will inherit.

Roher, who directed *The AI Doc* with Charlie Tyrell (at the start of the project he was also a soon-to-be father), conducts a string of interviews that creates the film’s narrative, educating viewers about AI while exploring its dangers and potential. It was a team effort with producers including Academy Award-winning *Everything Everywhere All at Once* filmmakers Daniel Kwan and Jonathan Wang, as well as Shane Boris, Diane Becker, Josef Beeby, Ted Tremper, and EJ Lykes.

Broadway relates that as the story evolved (due to schedules, she and Coombe worked on the movie at different points in time), its core remained the same. “How we are leaving this world for the next generation, and what we can do to make sure that we’re leaving it in the best way possible,” she explains. “We could tell that [AI] feels inevitable to people who don’t work in the industry, who aren’t in Silicon Valley, and so that

kind of became a big theme. How do we explain to people that this isn’t inevitable, that we still have agency?”

Roher is a compelling protagonist with whom the audience could go on this journey. “Daniel’s reactions can reflect their own reactions,” Broadway says of his expressions, ranging from worry or optimism to simply not buying what is being said.

Roher also brings some levity to the subject, something Broadway feels was important for the audience. “If you give people permission to laugh, you’ll give them permission to cry. They’ll feel comfortable and safe enough to let their guard down, and then they can accept what you’re telling them,” she says, adding, “We wanted it to be kind of funny, but then also wanted people to take it seriously. So tonally, there was an interesting balance.”

As an outsider asking the questions, Roher makes the subject accessible to all viewers, though as Coombe (*The Social Dilemma*) explains, this was a delicate task as AI (and the public’s understanding of it) was evolving rapidly as the film was being made. “Figuring out a way to explain, especially the cutting edge of the technology, in a way that was compelling and not confusing and just not old news, was a constant challenge,” he says. “In earlier versions of the film, we really dove pretty deep into the evolution of the technology leading up to large language models. And we ended up really having to cull a lot of that back because it became more and more common knowledge.”

With such a vast subject as AI, they also had to limit what was in the doc, which runs 1 hour and 44 minutes. “We could have made a whole other film about problems like algorithmic bias or AI’s carbon footprint,” Coombe notes. “Ultimately if we didn’t have the screen time to really do them justice, we removed them.”

The editors had a mountain of material with which to shape the story. This included more than 40 interviews (most were two to three hours long but others were conducted over multiple days) and hundreds of hours of archival material as well as some (human-made, stop-motion) animation.

The tonal shifts could be tricky. Broadway cites a segment that she feels also drives home the humanity in the story – a sequence during which Tristan Harris, co-founder of the Center for Humane Technology, admits that “he knows people in AI risk who don’t expect their children to survive anything past high school.

“It was something that I remember being placed in a couple different sections, in a couple different ways,” Broadway says, noting that ultimately they followed this with Roher “sitting alone in the dark in the studio, and the lights going down on him. You could really feel the weight of that moment on him. ... And then [his wife] tells him to go find hope. I really love that moment structurally, and I love how it kind of slows the film down and redirects it.”

A key segment, late in the film, includes interviews with AI company executives such as OpenAI’s Sam Altman, Google DeepMind’s Demis Hassabis, and Anthropic’s Dario Amodei. (Meta’s Mark Zuckerberg declined to participate, and Elon Musk initially agreed to an interview and later became too busy, according to the doc.) These more difficult interviews to secure also came in late in the filmmaking process.

“There had always been a question of how we would use those interviews,” Coombe relates. “It seemed like we could use these CEOs as sort of gurus on top of a mountain who maybe held the final answer to this question, ‘who would be the place where the buck stopped?’ By the time we did those interviews, we knew that that would be a standalone scene.”

He notes that this sequence focuses on these execs, without B-roll and while using very little music. “Daniel’s character is really at the end of his wit at this point, and we’ve run out of people to ask questions. The stakes are higher.”

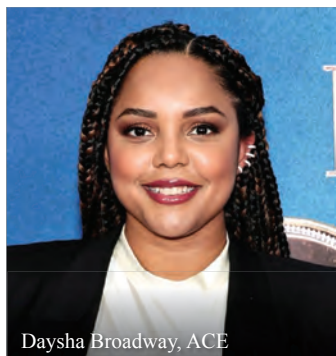
Tyrell spearheaded the animation, which was included to move on from this segment. “The animation where a mountain appears in Daniel’s studio [as a metaphor] had initially been created for a different scene,” Coombe remembers, adding that they instead used it here as “a new metaphor of climbing a mountain to get to the ultimate truth. It’s my favorite solution that we came up with in the edit.”

The editorial team also included Broadway’s assistant editor Aneesa Meador, and Coombe’s assistant/associate editor, Laurie Polisky. Broadway edited at Parallax, the L.A. editorial studio co-owned by Daniels collaborator Paul Rogers, ACE, (*Everything Everywhere All at Once*), while Coombe cut at his studio in Denver.

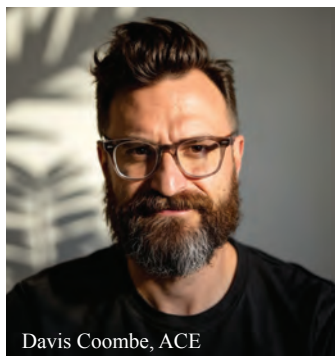
At the time that she embarked on *The AI Doc*, Broadway admits she worried that AI could be detrimental to filmmaking. “It seemed like the first jobs that everyone thought it would replace were jobs in the arts, especially editing, especially filmmaking.”

Upon completion, she feels more hopeful. “I think it’s important that everybody give it their full attention so that we can decide how we’re going to use it, but I came away from the film feeling like we have that agency,” Broadway says. “There are still a lot of things to focus on and a lot of things to fix, but some things are changing and progressing. So we are not helpless in this fight.”

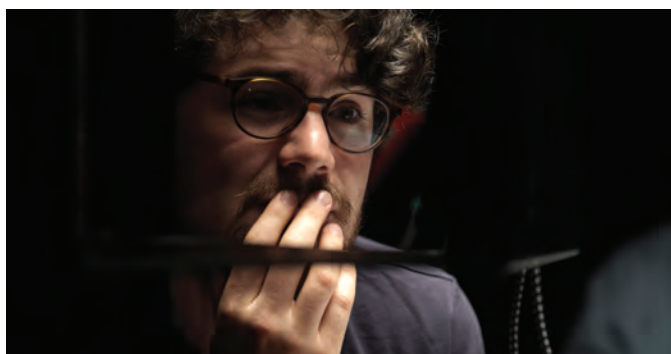
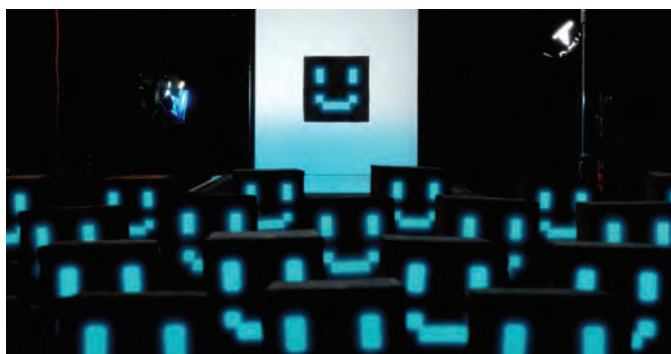
Coombe worries that AI is going to “further increase the massive income disparity that we see in the world [and] lead to a small number of companies just gaining more and more control over more and more segments of our economy. I worry that, especially in the creative industries, we will all start to become addicted to these services, and that at some point that is going to be a huge problem, because we’re going to be talking about not only job loss and the loss of creative voices and of human-led creation, but also the few people that will be creating will be relying upon services that are owned by these same companies.



Daysha Broadway, ACE



Davis Coombe, ACE




“People talk about technology being a tool, but this technology is quickly becoming something different. These technologies are being shared with us as services that we pay for, which means that the more we use them, the more reliant upon those companies that own these technologies we become. If they decide they want to charge more or they want to change the terms of those services ... they are starting to control our voices as creators. And that’s a very dangerous situation, a very dangerous relationship.”

Still, he acknowledges AI can offer efficiencies in the cutting room. “I definitely would not caution editors away from using it. ... You’re not going to lose your editing job to an AI. You’re going to lose your editing job to an editor who is using AI. It’s going to be a responsibility for everyone to stay on top of the technology.

“I think it’s important that editors and other creatives work together and pressure these industries to provide us with tools and services that that don’t just make our lives easier ... but allow us to make things that we could never have made before.” Related, Kwan, Wang, and Tremper are founding members of the Creators Coalition on AI, a hub for discussion about the impact of AI on the entertainment industry.

Broadway conveys a cautious optimism. “I think that it’s right to be hopeful and optimistic, but we have to pay attention to things as they shift. And [we have to] pay attention to how we’re using the tools and what tools they’re presenting to us – even the nonlinear systems we use: [Adobe] Premiere, Avid, etc. As they start to present new AI tools for us to use, we have to look at those and go, ‘OK, this one’s useful, but this one might be overstepping.’”

“I don’t think panic is the right response to it,” she adds, concluding, “I think we just need to make sure we have a good grasp and control over it, because we’re not just pressing buttons. Our creativity, our humanity, is what makes the film.” 

# NAB Show Signals a “Maturity” in AI



**Exhibitors at the Las Vegas confab discussed their approaches to AI and potential opportunities in production**

BY CAROLYN GIARDINA

**A**I remains a thorny subject in Hollywood and a central issue in labor negotiations, but at the recent NAB Show, it was the manufacturers’ turn to present their positions about the tech. “There’s a maturity that’s happening in AI,” said Avid Vice President of Product Management Guillaume Aubuchon, a message echoed by countless exhibitors across the show floor.

Sohonet CEO Chuck Parker didn’t mince words about the current climate. “Anyone who tells you they’re not using AI is either lying or just about to go out of business,” he asserted.

Attendance at the annual National Association of Broadcasters confab – this year held from April 18-22 in Las Vegas – underscored the evolving nature of the business. According to the NAB, the event attracted an estimated 58,000 registered attendees and 48% – nearly half – were first timers.

Across the exhibition floor, there were many startups to explore, as well as familiar stops such as the Avid booth. The Media Composer developer attracted crowds at its presentation theater, where Avid’s Matt Feury and Michael Krulik hosted presentations with several editors about their recent work, including Joel Negron, ACE, who presented *Project Hail Mary* alongside supervising sound editor/designer Erik Aadahl; Andy Jurgensen, who talked about his Oscar-winning work on *One Battle After Another*; and Nathan Schauf, editor of best animated feature Oscar winner *KPop Demon Hunters*.

Also in the presentation area, Krulik talked about Avid’s AI strategy, saying that editors and assistants “can build a workflow or extension for Media Composer,” meaning that editors can access AI applications without leaving Media Composer, using Flawless’ DeepEditor as an example. “It’s assistive AI. It’s a solution which creates visual dubs, allowing editors to change lines of dialogue after shooting,” he stated of DeepEditor, claiming, “Assistive AI is fundamentally different from generative AI, which is important. It’s built to support the artists and the editors, not replace them.”

Krulik turned the mic over to Kevin Tent, ACE, who joined him on the stage, alongside Flawless customer success manager Hunter Woodworth.

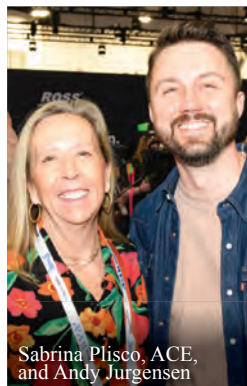
“I am a big fan of this tool,” Tent said. “There are so many times where you have an off camera line that is actually better than what’s on camera, and this tool will allow you to take that line and put it in an actor’s mouth, which is pretty amazing, and lip syncing.

“We could always do something like this with visual effects. ... but what’s great about Flawless is that you can upload the shot you want, and you’ll have it in an hour or so,” he continued. “It’s taking all the things that we’ve often used – like I often pull dialogue from other takes to get the right pronunciation of words, and I think most editors do that – but this is just taking that a step further.”

Tent added that particularly with comedies, “you could probably go a little nuts ... It’s gonna make a lot of more work for editors, but we’re okay with that.”

Asked about responsible use of AI, Tent likened use of DeepEditor to a sort of “on camera ADR.” He explained, “In editing, we’re always adding lines. ... so in a way, it’s the same thing. But that would have to get worked out with the cast. I would kind of think of it like temp music. We can cut with music all day long, but when it goes to finishing a film, we have to have the rights to that music, or we have to have it replaced by something that we can get the rights to.”

As an example of its use, Woodworth noted that DeepEditor was tapped for 2025 comedy *Playdate*. “The only way that it was able to be distributed on Amazon was reducing the rating,” she said. “So there were just a few moments where we were taking away some of the more vulgar lines. But instead of replacing them with like a ‘frick,’ the writers were able to make funny jokes, so that even though we were changing it and toning it down a little, it was still able to be a funny joke, not obviously censored.”



Sabrina Plisco, ACE, and Andy Jurgensen



Michael Krulik, Kevin Tent, ACE, and Hunter Woodworth



Aubuchon noted that Avid’s AI strategy in selecting partners such as Flawless is to identify developers “focused around an assistive editorial experience. ... We’re focused on the professional editor, first and foremost, and delivering tooling into the application that makes them more efficient.”

A big component of Avid’s strategy is a new multi-year strategic partnership with Google Cloud, to integrate generative and agentic AI into Avid tools including Media Composer. “By embedding Google’s Gemini models and Vertex AI directly into Avid’s solutions, the collaboration aims to transform video editing from a mostly manual process into an intelligent, AI-assisted experience, significantly reducing the time required for media discovery and production.”

Aubuchon added that Avid is keeping up communication with Motion Picture Editors Guild (IATSE Local 700). “AI is here to stay,” he said, adding though that they don’t want to see jobs replaced by AI. “So we’re trying to find – I think that’s what we’re talking with 700 about – what is that line?”

### Blackmagic Intros DaVinci Resolve 21

Blackmagic came to NAB with a collection of new tech including DaVinci Resolve 21, a new version of its editing/color grading/post-production software. It’s now in beta and available as a free download on the company’s website.

The company reported that the new version incorporates a number of new tools empowered by AI tech. Among them are AI IntelliSearch (search for people or objects), AI Speech Generator (transforms written text to spoken voice), and AI SlateID (to read slate and populate clip metadata).

AI Face Age Transformer gives artists a tool for aging or de-aging a face; AI Face Reshaper reshapes and resizes facial features; and AI Blemish Removal repairs skin blemishes.

New AI tools in DaVinci Resolve 21 also include AI CineFocus (bokeh and lens effects), AI UltraSharpen (high fidelity sharpening of moving images), AI Motion Deblur (removal of ‘common’ motion blur artifacts), AI Magic Mask (separately color grade different elements on an image), and AI SuperScale (upscale low resolution images).

### Adobe’s Color Mode

Adobe was on hand at NAB to talk about AI as well as a new Color Mode. “We have completely reinvented the way that editors work with color in Premiere, purpose built for editors working with color,” said Adobe Director of Product Marketing Meagan Keane. “It’s enabling editors to have a more intuitive, sort of story-focused, creative approach to color versus the math and science of color.”

Keane noted that Color Mode could be used instead of or in addition to going to a final color grading suite. “Even for editors who are going to a final grade, they are expected to do so much in the editorial before it even goes to final color that they need these robust tools to be able to really manipulate color as much as they can in the edit.”

On the tool’s capabilities, she noted there are various ways to make adjustments. “You can take operations and you can apply them to a single clip, you can apply them to the entire sequence, or what I think is really exciting, you can apply them to a group of clips,” she said. “All of the new functionality we’ve been adding over the last couple years is all coming to fruition in terms of how editors can work with color in Color Mode.”

On the AI front, Adobe continues to expand access to AI models from within its Firefly app, the latest being integration with Kling 3.0 and Kling 3.0 Omni video AI models. Other integrations



include Google's Nano Banana 2 and Veo 3.1, Runway Gen-4.5, Luma AI's Ray3.14, and ElevenLabs' Multilingual v2.

"When you access those models through Firefly surfaces or Adobe Creative platforms like Photoshop or Premiere, your IP is protected," Keane claimed, elaborating that "if you are accessing those models through an Adobe tool or through Firefly, contractually, they are not allowed to be training on any of the IP that is put through Adobe services. ... As long as the creatives are able to hold onto their own IP, that's really important for them to feel safe in sort of diving into these worlds of AI."

Looking ahead, she acknowledges that "the models are going to keep leapfrogging each other ... but what we're now really seeing is that people are starting to tune into the workflow."

### Strada's Connect

Brothers Michael and Peter Cioni's startup Strada, launched in 2023, is one such example of a company focused on workflow, including with AI capabilities. It arrived at NAB to introduce a new technology aimed at addressing the cost of cloud storage and time delays from file transfers. "The cloud is just too expensive for people to store original camera files," Michael, the company's CEO, asserted.

Strada Connect is aimed at supporting a workflow for remote teams who would instead of cloud, use their own local computer and storage. Michael explained that it's developed to work directly in a computer's Finder window. (Initially, it will be available on MacOS, with plans for Windows support at a later date.)

"We're simply saying, stop doing the cloud thing. Just access the local stuff as if it were cloud through a peer-to-peer network," Michael related, noting "you can do remote editing, remote sound mixing, remote color correction, remote photo editing, whatever."

### Sohonet's Fabric

Also at NAB, Sohonet launched Media Fabric, a managed infrastructure that brings together networking, cloud access, security, and data movement (including Sohonet's existing separate services) for post-production. Aforementioned CEO Parker reported that these are effectively bespoke workflows that could be created for a handful of remote collaborators up to a large production.

He emphasized that Sohonet doesn't dictate customers' storage when setting up these workflows. "They can go buy their own NAS (network attached storage). They can get cloud storage from us or from somebody else. We just want to make sure that we can get the workflow up and running," he said, adding that they work with all major cloud providers including AWS and could also set up a private cloud.

A key element of Media Fabric's data movement capabilities is enabled by Sohonet's new partnership with file transport software developer Resilio, which Parker likened to "Dropbox on steroids."

On Sohonet's AI strategy, Parker reported that "as a company, we use AI as much as we can" for uses such as automating its billing process.



Chuck Parker



Meagan Keane



Michael and Peter Cioni


"At the product level, we have a bunch of features we're rolling out that are enhanced by AI. What we're expecting AI to do as an impact on the industry is accelerate lots of things," he related. "Since we have a lot of asset management, there's a lot of interesting things that can happen around search and tagging and metadata. That's the right play for Sohonet's products."

### Forward Looking

Despite the gloomy state of post-production in L.A., Parker suggests there are some reasons for optimism. "We're expecting a growth in video production, not just in classic TV and film, but in all the 'nontraditional' sources. We refer to things like creator economy. We talk about AI production studios, micro studios. There's a lot happening."

Speaking on a panel that explored the potential of verticals and micro-dramas, entertainment lawyer Dave Feldman, a co-founder and partner at Brecheen Feldman Breimer Silver & Thompson, suggested that "actors that are used to being on television shows and films, they're going to look for quality writing, even in a micro-drama."

This, he suggested, could lead to a chicken-and-egg situation. "If actors that are used to quality writing are interested in doing micro-dramas, I think good writing will come, and I think that's what's going to happen to micro-dramas. Inevitably, budgets are going to climb; studios willing to spend more," he said. "It's going to evolve as another platform for programming to be distributed quicker, or they become like seeding for actual shows, testing."

"I do think that as it becomes popular ... they are going to test the waters," he added. "Some will work, some won't, but they are going to look for higher quality material." 

# "A genuine work of unfiltered artistry"

STATUS NEWS



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## **OUTSTANDING PICTURE EDITING FOR A DRAMA SERIES**

Skip Macdonald, ACE  
Chris McCaleb, ACE  
Joey Liew

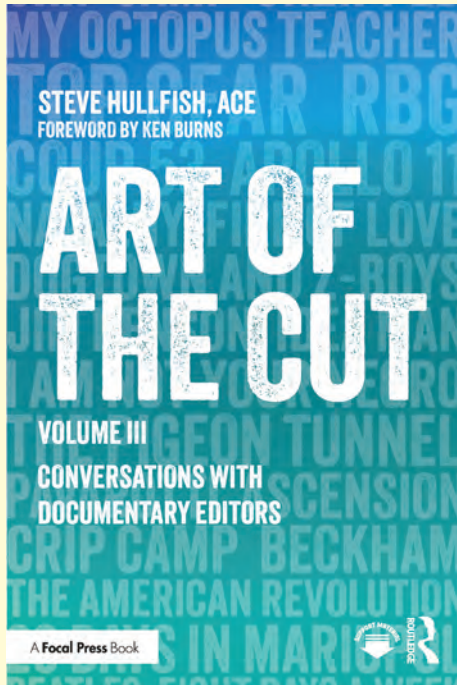


Apple tv

PLURIBUS

## Art of the Cut, Volume III: Conversations with Documentary Editors

by Steve Hullfish, ACE



REVIEW BY ADRIAN PENNINGTON

In his third book in the *Art of the Cut* series Steve Hullfish, ACE, turns to documentary filmmaking. From over 100 interviews (and nearly a half-million words of transcripts) originally conducted for the *Art of the Cut* podcast, Hullfish has curated the experience and insight of documentary experts into a “virtual roundtable” of wisdom, anecdote, and inspiration.

In a foreword, esteemed documentarian Ken Burns (whose docuseries *Jazz*, *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*, *Civil War* and *The American Revolution* are featured in the book) writes, “I can have the rarest archival footage, the most glorious cinematography, insightful interviews, perfectly crafted narration, but nothing compares to what takes place in the editing room. It’s the synthesis of everything we’ve gathered. It’s central to the art of filmmaking.”

A filmography which forms the first chapter of the book gives a good sense of

the diverse and worldwide scope of productions and editors who were involved.

They include Michael Oliver, ACE (*Welcome to Wrexham*); Michelle Mizner, ACE (*20 Days in Mariupol*); Langdon Page, ACE (*Navalny*); and Jim Hession, ACE (*American Symphony*). It also features directors such as Pippa Ehrlich (*My Octopus Teacher*), Brett Morgen (*Moonage Daydream*), and Brendan Bellomo (*Porcelain War*).

Following the same format as his previous two books, volume III is designed to be read non-linearly – something editors will only be too familiar with.

“The art and craft of editing is really too organic and holistic to be defined by chapters and subheadings,” Hullfish explains. “There is a lot of cross-over between concepts like story and structure or between organizing the project and approach to a scene; or between dealing with notes, or screenings, and collaborating with a director. Use it for inspiration when you’re at a new part of the process of your documentary film.”

Archive is often part of the documentarian’s arsenal and a section devoted to it emphasizes the deeper context its use can make in service to story.

“There’s a richness in archival that comes from the tension between the reason it was originally created and the reason it’s being reused,” says editor Nels Bangarter. “The audience’s mind is drawn to its subtext because you sense that it had a different meaning originally.”

Interviews are another bread-and-butter component of many documentaries. Hullfish finds that they are sometimes viewed as the weakest element, but he challenges this notion by quoting editors like Michael Harte, ACE, underscoring the importance of interviews in understanding character and motivation when used skillfully. He says, “My dream is to make a documentary where it’s just interview. There’s no archive. It’s just some guy who sits down and tells a story for an hour and a half and that’s it. That’s the dream.”

By connecting fresh footage and archive material using the panoply of techniques from sound to transitions, a documentary can plausibly claim to be ‘written’ in the edit. Walter Murch, ACE, has famously

argued that every documentary editor should have a writing credit.

“It’s more a 3D or 4D type of editing with docs because I can bring anything in narratively,” editor Ryan Stevens Harris (*Moonfall*) says. “You comb through everything, hunting for vérité moments – little things with the characters.”


Editor David Tillman (*Diana: In Her Own Words*) adds, “When you’re working with transcripts in a sense you’re figuring out the order of things, so you’re organizing and piecing together the story the way a writer would. It blurs the line between editing and writing.”

Of course, editing is not just an artistic endeavor; it’s also an ethical one. As Burns points out, “documentary filmmakers have a responsibility to tell the truth, even as we navigate the tension between storytelling and historical accuracy.”

Perhaps the most important chapter is on ethics and journalistic integrity. “Most documentaries are not held to the journalistic need to be fair or balanced” in the same way as news, writes Hullfish. Stephen Mirrione, ACE, agrees there are “fake” things in docs but says this is the wrong conversation to have.

“When somebody is trying to tell a story, there’s an emotional truth that’s being conveyed – a truth that reveals a deeper, more mysterious truth beyond simply recording reality,” he says.

Perhaps a later edition of this book will devote a larger section to the role of AI, which is seeping into some doc storytelling. Eileen Meyer, ACE, and Aaron Wickenden, ACE, who cut *Roadrunner: A Film About Anthony Bourdain* which used AI to generate Bourdain’s voiceover in three clips, defend the tactic.

“You will see that some editors contradict and disagree with each other and others support and supplement various arguments and concepts,” notes Hullfish. “In the discussion, I hope that you will see that there is room for your own opinions and methods to be just as valid and useful as the expert editors [interviewed for the book]. And as you read examples given in the interviews, even if you haven’t seen the movie, I hope you can see the concept behind the example and how it can apply to something that you are editing.” 




A C E

AWARDS  
COVERAGE

2026

## ACE NOMINEE COCKTAIL PARTY

ACE feted the nominees of the 76th Eddie Awards during a cocktail party, Feb. 25 at Walt Disney Studios' Buena Vista Cafe. Nominees were presented their nominee trophies during a lively party during which guests enjoyed drinks and hors d'oeuvres. Sponsors Adobe, Avid and Blackmagic Design donated software to ACE Interns and Student Competition nominees, with the latter also receiving Blackmagic Speed Editors. 



## AVID & HP COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Eddie Awards Platinum Sponsors Avid and HP hosted a pre-show reception for this year's Eddie nominees and honorees, Feb. 27 at UCLA's Royce Hall. During the reception, guests took photos and mingled while enjoying cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Nominees also signed a commemorative nominees poster. [CE](#)



## 76th ACE Eddie Awards



The festive celebration of film editors was filled with humor and heart:  
**“We have the best job in filmmaking.”**

BY CAROLYN GIARDINA

The 76th annual ACE Eddie Awards celebrated the close-knit editing community while honoring outstanding work in 14 categories of film, television, documentaries, and reflecting the evolution of entertainment, a new category for shorts and digital content. Also during the ceremony, held Feb. 27 at UCLA’s Royce Hall, Ang Lee accepted the ACE Golden Eddie Filmmaker of the Year Award, while Emmy winning editor/director Arthur W. Forney, ACE, and Oscar-nominated editor Robert Leighton received Career Achievement Awards. Kim Larson, managing director and head of YouTube’s creator and gaming team, accepted the ACE Visionary Award on behalf of YouTube, recognizing how the platform has expanding opportunities for creatives.

*Sinners* and *One Battle After Another* topped the live-action feature competition, with *Sinners* editor Michael P. Shawver collecting the award for a dramatic feature and *One Battle After Another*’s Andy Jurgensen, for a comedic feature. *One Battle* director Paul Thomas Anderson and *Sinners* helmer Ryan Coogler were both acknowledged by their editors, who also gave shout-outs to their respective films’ editorial teams.

“Every time I come to an [ACE] event ... I feel like I’m in the place I’m supposed to be at that point in my life,” said Shawver. “It all has to do with every member in here, with the hands you reached out to the younger generations. I’m just overcome with emotion.”

He thanked and praised the *Sinners* team, especially additional editor/first assistant and “IMAX guru” Mike Fay, first assistant Travis Cante, assistant editors Dane Maddock and Andrew Wallace, post supervisor Tina Anderson, music editor Felipe Pacheco, and Warner Bros. Senior VP of Feature Post-production Sean Wimmer. “I want to thank Warner Bros. for the incredible support you gave us. You trusted us as filmmakers, you took the risk. Especially in the in the post department, Sean Wimmer, your unbelievable support. [I] always felt like we were being listened to.”

Jurgensen acknowledged members of his *One Battle* team, especially post supervisor Erica Frauman, associate editor Jay Trautman, first assistant editors Andrew Blustain and Tom Foligno, second assistant Colleen Murphy, and post PA Daisy Emminger. “This really was a monumental undertaking, working with unconventional film formats, and because of them and the amazing team at FotoKem and Warner Bros., we were able to present this movie on film in VistaVision.”

He dedicated his award to a trio that he met on his first film (as a post PA), *Charlie Bartlett* – Jon Poll; Alan Baumgarten, ACE; and Catherine Haight, ACE. “They’ve championed me. They’ve encouraged me,” he said. “They taught me how to cut comedy, to trust my gut, and that the real secret to this job is to be kind, to not take things too seriously and to surround

yourself with good people. I love you guys, and I'm endlessly grateful to have you in my life."

The show's opening set the tone for an evening filled with humor and heart. ACE President Sabrina Plisco, ACE, led a touching tribute to ACE members and all Los Angelenos affected by last year's wildfires. "You are not alone. We are here for you," she told those affected, introducing a video tribute titled "I Miss," created by the ACE Connect-Support Committee, which was founded last year in response to the wildfires and challenging production climate. "ACE stands with you."

Actor and comedian Asif Ali hosted the show. "You are the heroes," he told the editing community during his opening monologue, getting a big laugh as he added, "actors are walking around with too much confidence because of you."

Christopher Guest presented Leighton with his Career Achievement Award. The editor is a decades long collaborator with Guest and the late Rob Reiner, on such classics as *This Is Spinal Tap*. Admitting that public speaking makes him nervous, the mild-mannered Leighton, who received a standing ovation, asked his partner, Maryann Brandon, ACE, to join him on stage to assist in reading his remarks.

In the speech, Leighton acknowledged the "many talented, creative, and hilarious people" he has worked with. "The years I spent working with Rob and Chris were intense and joyous. They are some of the happiest memories of my career, and I will always be grateful that we found each other," Brandon read, citing hard work as well as laughs – from Reiner's lobster claw harmonica to tossing Kem rolls of film to Guest's office golf game.



"He's so honored to be recognized with this award by all of you, his editing peers," Brandon said, reading, "I think of us as the heroes behind the heroes in the film world. It reminds me of just one of the many funny experiences I had with Rob in the cutting room." She set the stage: They were working on a troubled scene in *Rumor Has It*.

"I worked every angle and eventually came up with a solution that made the scene work," she read. "I showed it to Rob. He was so relieved that he immediately picked up the phone, called his producer, 'Bob found the solution, saved the picture.' I was so proud. Next phone call was to another producer. 'We came up with a solution and saved the picture.' Final phone call, 'Problem solved, picture saved.' It had become everyone's idea and everyone's ideal collaboration. At that very moment, the producer, who was in the room leaned over to me and said, 'That's why you get the medium bucks, Bob.' That sums it up, we might get the medium bucks [but] we have the best job in filmmaking. We get to see it all."

An emotional Leighton took the mic for some final words, thanking Guest for "countless memories," and Reiner, saying "I know you still had so much to contribute. I miss you. I love you." Reiner, an ACE honorary member and 2010 Golden Eddie honoree was also remembered during a touching In Memoriam segment.

## Nurturing Talent

Peter Jankowski, president and COO of Wolf Entertainment, introduced Forney's Career Achievement Award presentation.



“His nurturing and his eye for talent made our post-production team the best in the business. He worked on 132 seasons for Wolf Films, that’s 2,287 episodes of drama,” he said, adding, importantly, “Arthur’s hired and nurtured 119 editors.”

Forney, who received a standing ovation, thanked Jankowski, Dick Wolf, and the team at Wolf Entertainment, including *Law & Order* actors Mariska Hargitay, S. Epatha Merkerson, and Christopher Meloni, who helped present the award.

Describing editing as “the best job in the world,” Forney also recognized the ACE community. “There are so many of you guys in the room here and that I’ve crossed paths with throughout the years. I cannot thank you enough for making me a better editor and a better storyteller,” he said, noting that it’s “in the dark rooms where stories come alive. ... The greatest thing about our businesses, when you walk away, you live with it forever.”

With an eye toward the next generation, he said, “When you’re looking to hire a PA or an apprentice and an assistant, and you see a crowd of young people hoping for a shot. There might be one hungry kid in that room, someone with a dream, someone who doesn’t have the same background. Take a chance on them, I was that kid.” He added, “If you do give them that break, they just might surprise you.”

Ang Lee – the auteur behind films such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Life of Pi* – received a standing ovation as he accepted the Golden Eddie, presented by producer Marc Platt. “When you give me this award, you are actually giving it to Tim Squyres [ACE], Lee said, saluting the editor who



was has cut nearly all of his movies over the past 35 years.” Lee also enjoyed the “sweet reunion” with former assistants and post pros who were in attendance at the Eddies.

Lee spoke about the vital role of editing in filmmaking. “A movie has so many parts that fit together, whether it’s thought, emotion, drama, music, words, or any other parts. The through-line is what it’s all about. There’s a spine in filmmaking,” he said. “The way you put it together, you make the meaning grow. You can reinterpret it. When it’s done well, you don’t feel the cuts. Somehow it makes a movie better than you can even imagine. And you move people in such a profound way, they don’t even know what hits them, and that to me is editing.”

Kim Larson discussed creativity amid the changing media and entertainment landscape as she accepted YouTube’s ACE Visionary Award. “I believe that cinema is defined by the depth of the story and the meticulous craft that emotionally bring that story to life on any size screen. So today we can see that craft thriving on every corner of YouTube. We believe that YouTube and our creators are defining a new era of media and entertainment, and we see this cultural shift happening in a lot of places.”

Speaking to the “legends in this room,” she said, “You paved the way. Our creators have spent thousands of hours studying your cuts, your pacing, and your timing. So for ACE to open up its doors to creator-like content ... it’s an evolution that preserves the high standards of the craft while also inviting a new generation of storytellers to reach for them.”

She asked, “Can we let inspiration be reciprocal? By creators and Hollywood learning from each other, we can ensure the art of editing remains the heartbeat of entertainment.”

In the animation categories, *KPop Demon Hunters* editor Nathan Schauf collected the award in the animated feature competition, while the Eddie for an animated series was bestowed on David List and Nate Pellettieri for the “Twisted Christian” episode of *South Park*.

“Nate and I would both like to thank Trey Parker and Matt Stone for believing in us enough to let us edit their show. It was especially gratifying to work on these last 10 episodes because Trey and Matt really, really went for it,” List said.



“They challenged the boundaries of censorship and how far all of us can exercise our First Amendment rights. Whether it’s political commentary, mocking celebrity, or that expertly timed fart joke, our freedom of speech should ultimately be protected and celebrated, regardless of political party affiliation.”

Said Schauf, “I think we’re all perfectionists. ... We spend long days and hours and months sitting in dark rooms, obsessing over every little cut, dealing in the invisible art that a lot of times the audience doesn’t see but we very much hope they always feel. So to get this award, I’m extremely humbled and grateful to be [accepting] it to a room full of perfectionists.”

Series winners included Mark Strand, ACE, for *The Pitt*’s “6pm” episode (dramatic series); Eric Kissack, ACE, for *The Studio*’s “The Promotion” episode (single camera comedy series); and Russell Griffin, ACE, for *Frasier*’s “Murder Most Finch” episode (multi-camera comedy series).

Eddies were awarded to Yvette M. Amirian, ACE, for *A Winter’s Song* (feature film non-theatrical); Henk van Eeghen, ACE, for “A Great or Little Thing” episode of *The Penguin* (limited series); and Matthew Shaw, ACE, and Brad Roelandt for the “Austria” episode of *Conan O’Brien Must Go* (reality series).

Underscoring the mentorship that occurs in cutting rooms, Shaw shared that co-editor Roelandt started on *Conan O’Brien Must Go* as his assistant and was later promoted to editor. Roelandt got a big laugh when, holding the large award, he quipped, “I live in a studio apartment, so this is an honor and a burden.”

The Eddie for a variety talk/sketch show or special was awarded to the editors of the *Saturday Night Live 50th Anniversary Special*: Paul Del Gesso, Christopher Salerno, Ryan Spears, Daniel Garcia, Ryan McIlraith, and Sean McIlraith, ACE.

The inaugural Eddie Award for best edited short was handed out during the evening, honoring *All the Empty Rooms*, which follows news correspondent Steve Hartman and photographer Lou Bopp on a journey documenting the empty bedrooms of children lost to school shootings. Eddies for this powerful short were awarded to Erin Casper, ACE, Stephen Maing, and Jeremy Medoff.




“This award is dedicated to the memory of the four children at the heart of our film, whose lives were tragically lost in school shootings,” Casper said, naming these children: Dominic Blackwell, Gracie Muehlberger, Hallie Scruggs, and Jackie Cazares. “This is also in honor of each of their families who opened their doors to us and welcomed us into their sacred spaces of their child’s bedroom, preserved just as it was since the last day they saw their child alive.”

Eddie honorees for non-fiction work also included Viridiana Lieberman, for *The Perfect Neighbor* (documentary feature) and Damian Rodriguez, for *Pee-wee as Himself - Part One* (documentary series).

Two-time Oscar-winning filmmaker Chloé Zhao, ACE – who was also Eddie-nominated this year as co-editor of *Hamnet*, which she directed – looked to the next generation, presenting the Anne V. Coates Award for Student Editing to Luis Barragan of California State University, Fullerton. “This award given in [Coates’] honor [to inspire] the next generation of editors is a great tribute to her remarkable legacy,” Zhao said, acknowledging Adobe, Avid, and Blackmagic Design for donating software to each student nominee.

The celebration continued after the ceremony with a festive dinner reception at UCLA’s Ackerman Hall, during which guests enjoyed music, dinner, and drinks.

ACE wishes to thank Platinum Sponsors Avid and HP; Gold Sponsors Disney, HBO Max, Indee, Netflix, Paramount Pictures, Universal, Warner Bros., and the rest of the generous sponsors who helped to make the event possible. 



## 2026 ACE EDDIE AWARD WINNERS



**Host**  
Asif Ali



**ACE President**  
Sabrina Plisco, ACE



**ACE Golden Eddie Award**  
Honoree Ang Lee  
with presenter Marc Platt



**ACE Visionary Award**  
Honoree Kim Larson  
with presenter Michelle Khare



**ACE Career Achievement Award** - Honoree Arthur Forney, ACE with presenters Peter Jankowski, Mariska Hargitay, S. Epatha Merkerson, Christopher Meloni



**ACE Career Achievement Award**  
Honoree Robert Leighton  
with presenter Christopher Guest



**Best Edited Drama Feature**  
Winner Michael P. Shawver  
with presenter Wagner Moura



**Best Edited Comedy Feature**  
Winner Andy Jurgensen  
with presenter Wagner Moura



**Best Edited Animated Feature**  
Winner Nathan Schaaf with  
presenters Mary Blee, ACE, and Tia Carrere



**Best Edited Non-Theatrical Motion Picture**  
Winner Yvette M. Amirian, ACE with  
presenters Mary Blee, ACE, and Tia Carrere



**Best Edited Multi-Camera Comedy Series**  
Winner Russell Griffin, ACE, with  
presenters Liza Cardinale, ACE, and Taran Killam



**Best Edited Single-Camera Comedy Series**  
Winner Eric Kissack, ACE, with  
presenters Liza Cardinale, ACE, and Taran Killam



**Best Edited Limited Series**  
Winner Henk van Eeghen, ACE, with  
presenter Diane Warren



**Best Edited Drama Series**  
Winner Mark Strand, ACE, with  
presenter Diane Warren



**Best Edited Animated Series**  
Winners David List and Nate Pellettieri with  
presenters Danny Pudi and Kabir Akhtar, ACE



**Best Edited Short**  
Winner Erin Casper, ACE (Winners Stephen Maing  
and Jeremy Medoff not in attendance)



**Best Edited Reality Series**  
Winners Matthew Shaw, ACE, and Brad Roelandt  
with presenters Robin Thede and Stephanie Filo, ACE



**Best Edited Documentary Series**  
Winner Damian Rodriguez with presenters  
Melissa Fumero and Sandra Montiel, ACE



**Best Edited Documentary Feature**  
Winner Viridiana Lieberman with presenters  
Melissa Fumero and Sandra Montiel, ACE



**Anne V. Coates Award for Student Editing**  
Winner Luis Barragan  
with presenter Chloé Zhao, ACE

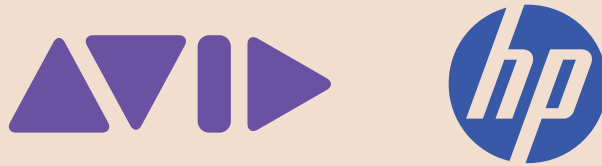
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## 26th Invisible Art/Visible Artists

Oscar Editing Nominees Discuss Their Films and Drive To Create “Forever Movies”

BY MATT ALLEN

**A**CE’s 26th Invisible Art/Visible Artists (IAVA) program was presented at the DGA Theater on March 14, one day before the Oscars ceremony, to celebrate the nominees for this year’s Academy Award in film editing. The theater for the popular annual event was packed with editors, students, and filmmaking enthusiasts.

The event opened with *Marty Supreme* writer and editor Ronald Bronstein making the entire crowd laugh when describing his love for editing and his relationship with fellow writer and editor Josh Safdie. “Josh and I also write together. It’s a big headache. We argue incessantly. Editing is the great reward at the end of this whole process because you don’t have to talk to anybody. I personally go into a zone when I edit. I don’t hear. Josh could be sitting right next to me. I don’t hear him,” Bronstein said. “That’s what editing is like for me. I love it. I have no relationship with wellness, so it’s the closest I get to meditation.”

Safdie, who also directed *Marty Supreme*, chimed in. “I think editing was the thing that really taught me how to be a director. I remember discovering an L cut when I was just playing with two clips and I was like, ‘Oh, what if I can hide the edit by having the audio come first?’ And then it started to make me think about when I’m shooting a scene ... When [actors] are listening to another person talking, I can do something with directing them. To me, editing and directing come hand in hand. Editing is the filmmaking in many regards.”

All of the film editing nominees, including Bronstein and Safdie, were on hand for this year’s IAVA, moderated by ACE President and Emmy-nominated editor Sabrina Plisco, ACE.

Stephen Mirrione, ACE, who was nominated this year for Joseph Kosinski’s racing drama *F1* and previously won an Oscar for Steven Soderbergh’s 2000 film *Traffic*, stressed the importance of creating an authentic F1 race experience throughout the editing process.

One challenge the post team faced was that there were race cars that actors were driving that were changed to other models by VFX in post. Therefore, essentially all car sounds had to be replaced during the post process. “Some of the best moments were when Lewis Hamilton, the seven time [F1] world champ and our producer, came to the editing room, and would watch through the races with us and the sound team,” Mirrione remembered. “[He would] sing his way through the track, just the musicality of it. Because a lot of times in racing movies, the instinct is to be constantly accelerating, accelerating, accelerating, but that’s not how those races work. By making sure that each corner of the sound was perfect, it created an authenticity that we at some point just began to take for granted because the sound team did such an amazing job.”

Norway’s drama *Sentimental Value* went on to win the Oscar for Best International Feature. The film’s Oscar nominated editor, Olivier Bugge Coutté, shared his approach to cutting films that contain a great deal of music. “On [my] last two films, even though they end up having quite a bit of music, I’ve actually tried to cut them completely without music. So for a very long time, the scenes have no music. And then when I put the music on, it’s sketches of what is going to be the final score.

“I think it’s interesting just to really study carefully the performance and the psychology and the characters,” he added.

“Try to let it steam for a while. Music will come on at some point, but just try to be completely clean with it. Just see what the performance is. Let the performance run. I’m privileged to have these amazing actors. I love if you are able to not cut and keep a shot for a very long time. If the actor is so good that you can see the whole transformation from one emotional stage to the next ... just stay with the actor, the silence and the performance of it.”

*One Battle After Another* editor Andy Jurgensen – who went on to win the Oscar in film editing – discussed the communal experience of making Paul Thomas Anderson’s film, which collected a total of six Oscars including best picture. “I was on location, and different from these guys [on the panel], we actually do dailies. Paul is really into dailies.” Noting that the film was shot on Super 35 and VistaVision, at the end of the day the filmmakers brought a projector with them. “We were sending the footage to FotoKem. They were making prints. They were sending it back to us wherever we were. We were setting up the screening room, either in the hotel we were staying at, or sometimes it was an empty space that we found, and it’s just a ritual for him to do dailies every night. And so it was just really important for me to be there.

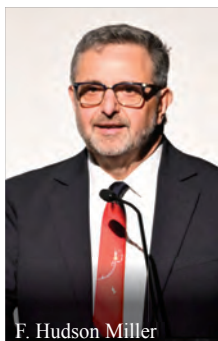
“It’s a communal experience to be watching how the movie is progressing. And then these screenings are just so important to our editing process because I can take notes. During the day, I’m not going to set. I’m starting to assemble stuff.” He added that watching dailies also aided the team in “figuring



Erin Flannery



Sabrina Plisco, ACE




F. Hudson Miller



out that sometimes we’ll reshoot something or we don’t need that scene anymore or whatever. So it’s very important to review. It’s also great for the morale of the crew, because if you do shoot something, everyone realizes why we’re doing it.”

As each editing panelist talked, their passion for honing their craft and putting their creative talents deeply into their work was evident. *Sinners* editor Michael P. Shawver shared how his longstanding collaboration with director Ryan Coogler led to a special relationship in the editing room. “This movie was so personal to him, and he cared about everything so much – all the characters and all the beats. He looked at me one day and said, ‘Look, I need you to tell me what’s in this movie or not.’ Which is a whole different thing than a collaboration, but it’s what the movie needed.”

Noting the pressures for the “\$90 million” movie to perform, Shawver added that Coogler “really let me sort of be the voice of reason. And I remember sitting in the room and thinking, ‘I’m the only producer in here, so I make nothing after this movie comes out. I want to make the best movie and I want to make a movie that people watch in 20 years. I want to make a movie like *The Fugitive* where you’re cleaning your house, you put it on, and you’re like, ‘Okay, I’m here. I’m watching the rest of this movie ... those forever movies.’”

ACE would like to thank Platinum Sponsor Blackmagic Design; and Gold Sponsor Motion Picture Editors Guild, which hosted a post panel reception. 

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## 98th Academy Awards

**One Battle After Another's Andy Jurgensen Thanks "Wonderful Cast and Crew" as He Accepts Film Editing Oscar**

BY CAROLYN GIARDINA

**A**ndy Jurgensen thanked the cast and crew of *One Battle After Another* on stage at the Dolby Theatre as he won the Oscar in film editing at the 98th Academy Awards, which capped this year's awards season on March 15. Paul Thomas Anderson's film earned a total of six Academy Awards including best picture. Multi-hyphenate Anderson claimed three trophies, for best picture, director, and adapted screenplay.

Accepting the award on stage from presenters Bill Pullman and Lewis Pullman, Jurgensen gave a "special thank you to my editorial crew, who worked their butts off behind the scenes. You guys are amazing." He went on to thank Anderson for "taking me on this journey and our collaboration. Thank you to the wonderful cast and crew. Love to my parents and my sisters who are up in the balcony somewhere. And to my partner, Bill, who brings so much joy to my life every day."

He dedicated the award to his aunt, Barbara Hall, a film archivist for the Academy for over 25 years. "She loved her job and she loved showing me old movies and teaching me about film history and I miss her every day and I would not be up here if it wasn't for her and my uncle Val."

En route to the Oscars, first-time nominee Jurgensen won the ACE Eddie for a comedic feature. (Eddie coverage can be found on p. 46.) Backstage, he talked about his journey with Anderson, which started with an assistant role, 12 years ago on *Inherent Vice*. "I guess I proved myself. He gave me little things to do, like little music videos, which then kind of evolved to this little documentary that he did. And he asked me to be the associate editor on *Phantom Thread*. So he just kind of kept me around.

"When you work with a director, you're figuring out their sensibilities and your working relationship," he continued. "He's been such a mentor to me and taught me so much about storytelling. And I was thrilled when he asked me to cut *Licorice Pizza* and then asked me to do this. So, I'm very grateful to him."

Anderson spoke on stage and backstage about Warner Bros.' *One Battle*, which was adapted from the novel *Vineland* by Thomas Pynchon. Acknowledging Pynchon, Anderson said, "I wrote this movie for my kids to say sorry for the housekeeping mess that we left in this world we're handing off to them. But also, with the encouragement that they will be the generation that hopefully brings us some common sense and decency."

He also saluted his creative team, saying, "The thing that really gets me excited about making films is the people I collaborate with." This was a theme celebrated through the ceremony.

The work of editor Michael P. Shawver – who won the ACE Eddie for a dramatic feature and received his first Oscar nomination for *Sinners* – helped deliver four Academy Awards to the Warner film.

*Sinners* DP Autumn Durald Arkapaw, ASC, became the first woman to win an Oscar in cinematography; writer/director Ryan Coogler took home an Oscar for original screenplay; Michael B. Jordan collected the award for best actor; and composer/songwriter Ludwig Göransson was honored for his score.

Joseph Kosinski's Apple racing drama *F1* – edited by Stephen Mirrione, ACE, who was Oscar and Eddie nominated for the movie – collected the Academy Award for its sound. Oscars went to supervising sound editors Al Nelson and

Gwendolyn Yates Whittle, production sound mixer Gareth John, and rerecording mixers Gary A. Rizzo and Juan Peralta. Said Nelson, “This film was made by filmmakers who embrace and celebrate theatrical experiences.”

*Sentimental Value* – whose editor Olivier Bugge Coutté was also a first time Oscar and Eddie nominee – collected the Academy Award for an international feature. “There’s 1,072 people on these credits, and I love them all, and I share this with them,” said director Joachim Trier as he accepted the statuette for the Neon release.

The work of several additional 2026 Eddie nominees or honorees were also celebrated at the Oscars.

*KPop Demon Hunters* won Academy Awards for best animated feature and original song (“Golden”), two weeks after editor Nathan Schauf collected the ACE Eddie in the animated feature competition.

Accepting the animated feature Oscar were directors Maggie Kang and Chris Appelhans and producer Michelle L.M. Wong. Appelhans spoke to the next generation, saying, “Music and stories have this power to connect us as humans across cultures and borders. So, I just want to take a moment to say to all the young filmmakers, artists, musicians in all corners of the globe, tell your story. Sing in your voice. I promise you the world is waiting.”

Jessie Buckley won the Oscar for Best Actress for her performance in *Hamnet*, which was directed, co-written and




co-edited by Chloé Zhao, ACE. Zhao and co-editor Affonso Gonçalves, ACE, were Eddie-nominated for *Hamnet*.

Amy Madigan won the supporting actress Oscar for *Weapons*, whose editor Joe Murphy was also Eddie nominated.

And the Oscar for documentary short went to *All the Empty Rooms*, whose editors Erin Casper, ACE, Stephen Maing, and Jeremy Medoff received the inaugural ACE Eddie award for best edited short.

Host Conan O’Brien kicked off his monologue quipping that he was “honored to be the last human to host the Academy Awards. Next year will be a Waymo in a tux.”

But he also took a moment to be serious, saying, “Everyone watching right now, around the world is all too aware that these are very chaotic, frightening times. It’s at moments like these that I believe that the Oscars are particularly resonant. Check it out, 31 countries across six continents are represented this evening, and every film we salute is the product of thousands of people speaking different languages, working hard to make something of beauty. We pay tribute tonight, not just to film, but to the ideals of global artistry, collaboration, patience, resilience, and that rarest of qualities today, optimism.” 

*CinemaEditor’s* full coverage of the 98th Academy Awards can be found on ACE’s website at <https://americancinemaeditors.org/ce-sneak-oscar-2026>



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| <b>Cinetechnician</b>      | <b>Scoring Mixer</b>      |
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# ACE Internship Program 2025 in Review

The ACE Internship Program was created in the early 1990s by William D. Gordean, ACE, and was directed by Lori Jane Coleman, ACE, and co-chaired by Diana Friedberg, ACE, for nearly two decades. Since 2015, the program has been co-chaired by two former interns, Carsten Kurpanek and Tyler Nelson, ACE. They run the L.A. program while Mollie Goldstein, ACE, and Joanna Naugle, ACE, are the co-directors of the New York City chapter and Steven Worsley, ACE, heads up the London program.

The Committee selects two interns from each city and provides them with the opportunity to shadow, for one week each, the editing rooms of a feature, a television show, and an unscripted show. Interns also visit several facilities integral to post-production all the while being mentored by ACE editors and previous alumni.

All our interns express their special thanks to the ACE Internship Committee for a seamless experience and exceptional programming and for the countless hours dedicated to supporting this program and many others in the craft and trade of editing.

## New York City



### Sophie Pope McCright

One month after moving to New York City with no job, no lease, and few connections to the post-production world, I was selected as a finalist for the ACE Internship Program. The experience that followed has surpassed my wildest expectations.

After four weeks of shadowing cutting rooms and touring post facilities across the city, some highlights include: being asked for my opinion on a cut by the film's director (terrifying!); contributing my voice to a loop group; seeing countless custom keyboard setups; and witnessing the evolution of a gag reel.

I expected that the shadowing experience would make me a better editor and improve my knowledge of the industry, and it did. The value of this program continues to surprise me. I've since gained access to a network of people who are willing to connect me with editors I've admired for years. I've got to know peers who understand and share my goals. I've watched so many movies I sometimes feel like my head might explode.

Most importantly, I've been accepted without question or qualm into a community of caring, passionate people. I would strongly encourage all future applicants to attend every ACE event they are invited to, and to meet as many people as you can. If you love film, TV, or documentary, then there will always be a good conversation to be had.

I don't think I can ever adequately repay the time, advice, and openness of others, but I'm determined to make the most of what I've learned and pay it forward. Getting to unpack the world of editing at its smallest levels has only affirmed my commitment to, and love for, the craft – there is nothing else I would rather be doing.

I'm particularly grateful to everyone in the cutting rooms that that [fellow intern Diego Fuentes] and I shadowed, and to all the ACE Internship Committee. Thank you!



### Jiaying (Carly) Lin

During my ACE Internship, I had the surreal privilege of sitting beside brilliant surgeon-magicians I admire, learning from the precision and creativity they infuse into their projects. Since graduating from NYU's Film & TV program, I've come to see post-production as a fascinating space where stories are written and rewritten. The ACE Internship brought me ever so close to the technical process, artistry, and collaborations that make this stage of filmmaking special. Having previously only worked on short films, this immersive experience has been incredibly eye-opening and transformative.

Throughout my time shadowing Jamie Kirkpatrick, ACE; Geoff O'Brien, ACE; and Keith Fraase, ACE, my most cherished lesson has been that when there is a problem, there must be a solution. Whether it's Frankenbiting interviews, FluidMorphing performances, or building an evocative sound mix, creative storytelling happens everywhere. Being able to communicate those ideas clearly to collaborators in the edit room is just as important as the craft itself.

To my amazing mentors, Corey Frost and Geoffrey Richman, ACE, thank you for enlightening me with more tips and insights than I could ask for. Thank you to the meticulous assistant editors I've met – Joshua Leib and Juliet Muldoon – for generously sharing their workflows with me. And thank you, Joanna Naugle, ACE; Keith Fraase, ACE; and Geoff O'Brien, ACE, for lending me your eye on my personal projects – however rough they may be – and graciously sharing your wisdom and advice. Your care is one that I will cherish for a lifetime.

Since the internship, I worked as an assistant editor on a feature film alongside editor Youmin Kang, and I was recently honored to be selected for the 2026 Canadian Film Center Editor's Lab, where I will continue to hone my craft. I am incredibly grateful to the entire ACE Internship Committee for their heartfelt support. I cannot wait for what's next!



## Diego Fuentes

The true value that the ACE Internship provides is immeasurable. But I can say that the most important parts to me are exposure, community, and mentorship.

Like many of those in post-production, my path was anything but direct. When I started school

at the University of Oklahoma, I wanted to be an engineer. But after a few years, I couldn't see myself sustaining that career and I switched to film. I realized I needed a creative outlet that could also satisfy my hunger for technical work, so I was naturally drawn to editing.

I started looking into what post-grad life would look like and it was during my sophomore year that I found the ACE Internship. At the time, I saw it as an opportunity for me to get out of Oklahoma and to be immersed in the world of editing and post at the highest levels. I thought the value of the internship would be exposure to technical skills, but its real value is so much more than that.

Through the internship, I've been able to find a community unlike anything I've experienced. It welcomes anyone and everyone willing to learn, and so I was able to satisfy my hunger for technical knowledge and effective workflows. Most importantly, I have been able to speak with talented editors and assistant editors, who are excited to share their knowledge, wisdom, and experience with anyone willing to listen.

I want to give a sincere thank you to Mollie Goldstein, ACE; Joanna Naugle, ACE; Geoff Richman, ACE; Corey Frost; Julia Bloch, ACE; all of the members of the ACE NY Internship Committee, as well as all of the projects that so graciously welcomed us in to shadow. I have witnessed the true value of this opportunity, and without them, I would not find myself in NYC working as an edit room assistant on my first show for season 5 of *The Bear*.

## Los Angeles



## Paige McGowan

Beginning my journey on the path of post-production was intimidating. With twists, forks, and dead ends in the road, it's often difficult to know where to step. Turning onto the path marked ACE Internship allowed me to explore uncharted lands that previously felt miles away and

changed my life in ways I never thought possible.

My co-intern and I started by touring post-production facilities, which guided us through the worlds of film processing, sound, and VFX. I learned from feature, scripted, and unscripted television cutting rooms. Each was full of masters of their craft who didn't hesitate to share their immense knowledge and stories. I gained invaluable insight into navigating the industry and observed dailies, turnovers, color, and online processes. I learned more than I could have imagined about the skills essential to becoming a strong assistant editor, and my most treasured experience has undoubtedly been the warm welcomes from the kind people of each cutting room.

I want to thank Jennifer Vecchiarello, ACE; Lauren Connelly, ACE; Laura Zempel, ACE; and Robert M. Malachowski Jr., ACE, for allowing me to learn in your incredible cutting rooms and for sharing your wisdom. Thank you to Christi Leftwich, Ellie Zarr, April Liu, Abby Boyle, Josh Stein, Joe Santos, Breeana Kovelman, and Eric Tell.

One of my most prized possessions is a little notebook filled with your knowledge. Thank you Tyler Nelson, ACE, for your continued support and encouragement, and Maura Corey, ACE, for being my support system since the very first day of my internship.

I'm currently working as a post PA on a feature film and assisting on my first short film under Corey Frost. When I reflect on the community I've been gifted, the path forward no longer feels so daunting. I'm more motivated than ever to pursue a career in this industry. The ACE Internship has provided me with knowledge, friendships, and memories that I will cherish forever.



## Aahir Ghosh

I vividly remember the moment I was chosen as an ACE Intern. Suddenly, the dream that I've been focused on for years was real. My co-intern and I began our journey by exploring the entire post process from the labs at FotoKem, to mixing at Smart Post

Sound, effects at Barnstorm VFX, and finishing at Company 3. All in the first week!

I learned the most by visiting various cutting rooms. I cherished every minute observing both the technical tasks and interpersonal interactions. I would sit with the VFX editor as they tagged shots, shadow the assistant editor during turnovers, or take notes as the post PA took lunch orders. Those may not sound thrilling, but to me, the world had opened up and shared its secrets.

Many folks have told me how small this industry is, but when you are just starting and know almost no one, it can feel very, very big. Every ACE event reminds me of this, yet I always manage to find a familiar face. Maybe an editor I've shadowed or the lovely former interns, Kakhi and Annabelle. They graciously introduce me to someone new each time, and

slowly, the strangers disappear, and the post-production world no longer feels so big. That's the true magic of ACE and the internship. You're introduced to a kind and selfless family that accepts you with open arms.

A grand thank you to Josh Beal, ACE, for your continuous support. Thank you to my mentor, John Axelrad, ACE, for your valued advice. Thank you to Meridith Sommers, ACE; Art O'Leary, ACE; Drew Kilcoin; Molly Shock, ACE; Troy Takaki, ACE; and Maura Corey, ACE, for allowing me into your editing rooms.

Currently, I am thankful to be a post PA on a scripted feature, and I have recently joined the union roster! My dreams came true, and new dreams lie ahead.

## London



### Stephanie Castelete-Tyrrell

My relationship with film was so strong from a young age because it was one of the few things I could engage with and do independently. It was and continues to be the most accessible mode of entertainment for me, where I can relax, enjoy, and learn at the same time.

In 2017, I took a master's degree at the University of Bristol and my passion for editing began. I studied a module called The Art of Editing and immediately fell in love. You can piece a story together, have lots of creative abilities without the need for much movement.

Since graduating, I have edited my own short and feature films, and I worked as an assistant editor on a feature documentary. Although I was practicing my self-taught skills, I felt that my knowledge was lacking in a lot of areas, as I hadn't had any professional training.

When I came across the ACE Internship Program, I knew it was an opportunity I couldn't miss. I learned an incredible amount from the assistant editors and editors, such as organizing dailies, creating sync maps, ScriptSync, tracklaying, sound passes, turnovers, VFX, and post-production paperwork.

Being in an environment where I could ask questions, learn and practice was invaluable and made me more confident with the processes.

I am sincerely grateful to Steven Worsley, ACE; Andy Morrison, ACE, and Richard Smither for accepting me onto the program and for continuing to support me. I would like to say a huge thank you to Rachel Hoult, ACE; Josh Cunliffe; Pier Wilkie; Fiorella Santaniello; Jakob Hassan; Kelly Allum; Pia Di Ciaula, ACE; Ruta Sile; Victoria Blackwood; and Tara Bhoola for mentoring me during my placements. I came away with a wealth of knowledge and confidence to build my career in editing.




### Jenny Pestana

Being part of the second UK ACE Internship was an honor filled with several pinch-me moments. The internship became my second film school, having come out of university with a love for editing without an editing degree. While I still have much to learn, I now

have greater knowledge of the responsibilities of an editorial trainee and will take this experience with me as I craft my career in post.

The facilities week kicked off with a bang when [additional intern] Stephanie and I had the chance to record ADR, alongside visiting The Look and Warner Bros.' De Lane Lea. As someone who's always been interested in offline editing, I got to see the in-house flip side and understand why certain deliverables are needed for online post houses. The following weeks on my placements showed me how productions of different sizes operated – from a Netflix feature and large series to a smaller Apple TV+ show. I saw in real time how hierarchies played out in meetings, and the importance of attention to detail in every task, from VFX reviews to QCing DME mixes. I got to geek out over the level of media organization and play around in Avid, facing its notorious quirks. Above all, I walked away understanding that no task is above your job title, and managing a room is equally important as your technical competence.

I would love to thank every assistant/coordinator/trainee who made me feel a part of their team for the week and generously answered all my questions while I anxiously wrote in my notebook. Especially Eleanor Adler; Ellie McDonnell; Adam Gough, ACE; Pd Hardy; Catarina Ribeiro; Carey Osborne; Elen Pierce-Lewis; Gyles Oakley; and Asher Thornton.

Your kindness made the experience unforgettable. To Steven Worsley, ACE, and Andy Morrison, ACE, thank you for your incredible hard work in putting the most wonderful month together alongside all your other responsibilities. I am forever grateful. 

## ACE Internship Program 2026

The American Cinema Editors Internship Program is now accepting applications for the 2026-2027 session. If you're a recent grad or a young professional with a love for editing send in your applications today. **Applications close June 30!**

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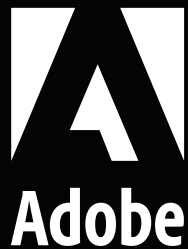
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# Internship Program

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# slumdog millionaire

2008 / Director Danny Boyle / Editor Chris Dickens, ACE



Directed by Danny Boyle from a Simon Beaufoy script, *Slumdog Millionaire* is a rags-to-riches love story set in Mumbai and centered around a TV game show.



As the film reaches its climax, protagonist Jamal (played as an adult by Dev Patel) answers a critical final question on a TV game show.



“It’s less complex than some of the earlier sequences, but this gives you a sense of how the film was structured with overlapping stories, scenes, and flashbacks,” says Chris Dickens, ACE. “Even though the script was written in a relatively linear way, it was still mixed up in terms of time spans and structure. We did an awful lot of intercutting between scenes.”



On the surface it’s about a boy who knows the answers on a game show, but underneath it has themes of poverty and the way the city operates.



“We didn’t quite realize how strongly the romantic element came through until we had a trailer done during the edit which emphasized the romance (between Jamal and Latika, played by Freida Pinto),” Dickens says. “We decided to push the love story further in the edit. For example, we layered occasional images of Latika when she was older (Jamal had seen her fleetingly at a railway station) so we used flashbacks and flash-forwards. All of that comes together at this point in the film.”





The narrative also concerns two brothers separated as children. “It’s a sort of Cain-and-Abel story – one brother is drawn into the crime world, the other is the opposite. This is the climax of that storyline too.”



The game show element was written in real time and the first cut featuring these sequences was very long. “Every time you went into *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* you settled into watching it like a TV show. It didn’t help the film. We realized early on that we had to be more creative – use visual cues to show what the contestant was thinking. Sometimes you only needed to pose the question, then go to the flashback showing why he knew the answer. When you came back, you didn’t need to re-enter the game show cleanly – you could come straight into the answer.”



Dickens’ experience on location in Mumbai informed his decisions. “Mumbai is an incredible city; everywhere you look something amazing is happening. Danny wanted to collect material that illustrated the story and captured the city.”



DP Anthony Dod Mantle, ASC, BSC, DFF, used multiple formats: film for the present-day sequences “because it looked more polished”; digital cameras for street work; and tiny still style cameras shooting eight frames per second for a flashback feel.



“As an editor, you need great material, and they gave me an abundance,” says Dickens. “I could have edited the film for years. Even now, when I watch it, I feel emotional – I can almost smell the city, the smoke, the slums. It can be overwhelming.”



Dickens’ work was rewarded with a BAFTA, an ACE Eddie and an Oscar – one of eight Academy Awards that the film received, including Best Picture. [CE](#)





# CINEMAEDITOR

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## 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
- NAACP Image Awards

Please sign our petition at:

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