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EDITORS DESK



Welcome to the 2016 NAB Issue of *StudentFilmmakers* Magazine. This edition marks our 11th year exhibiting at the NAB Show in Las Vegas, Nevada. Visit us at booth #C12431, April 18th through April 21st. Stop by to say hello and pick up your complimentary copies of *StudentFilmmakers* Magazine's new issue and collectors' editions. Bring your business cards for networking opportunities, chat with magazine editorial crew, and be ready for photo ops. We look forward to seeing you at the show!

This wonderful new issue highlights interviews with *Star Wars: The Force Awakens'* J.J. Abrams (Page 8), Maryann Brandon and Mary Jo Markey (Page 6) in the Directing and Editing Departments. Turn to the Post Production Department's technology-driven feature articles: "Render and edit at lightspeed with HP Z Workstations and AMD FirePro™ graphics," (Page 24) and "How AMD FirePro™ Technology Powers and the Next-Generation of Filmmaking Creativity" (Page 20). Enjoy the exclusive interview with David Burnett in "Newburgh Rising: A *Photographers for Hope* Journey" (Page 12, Documentary Department).

Also in this issue: "Yeah, It is Brain Surgery," (Page 15, Camerawork Department); "The Benefits of Borrowing from the Public Domain," (Page 16, Development Department); and "Preparation is Crucial" (Page 17, Pre-Production Department). Make sure to read "Online Distribution: *Five Lessons Learned,*" (Page 18, Distribution Department) and "Breaking into Hollywood: *The Five Things You Must Have in Order to Succeed*" (Page 19, Film Business Department). Get tips on how to get your gear safely from one venue to the next in the article, "Pack, Travel, Shoot," and check out our exclusive interview with Mike Sturm, Senior Designer, at Think Tank (Page 34, Gear and Accessories Department). The On Campus Department features Vancouver Film School (Page 22) and The National Centre for Computer Animation at Bournemouth University (Page 32). This issue's Film and Video Makers Community Spotlight is on Andrew R. Jimenez, (Page 32, Networking).

As a reminder, for a chance to be featured in the Networking Department of the magazine and website, create and update your free profile in the Film and Video Makers Network at http://networking.studentfilmmakers.com. Post your production stills, videos, and reels. Explore the new and upgraded tools and features such as the Events, Contests, Forums, and Classifieds sections.

Enjoy This Issue!
All the Best,
Jody Michelle Solis
Editor-in-Chief
networking.studentfilmmakers.com/jodymichelle

With the rapid application of changing technologies, we are all students.
Never Stop Learning.
Never Stop Networking.

MEET THE WRITERS



As a member of the Directors Guild of America **DEAN GOLDBERG** wrote and directed television episodes for "Missing Reward," "Hard Copy," "A Current Affair," and many other shows featuring dramatic recreations. From 1997-2007 he was creative director and president of Wolf at the Door Advertising. An associate professor of Communication arts and Film Studies at Mount Saint Mary College, he is also co-director of their new Technology and Digital major. *Newburgh Rising: A photographers for Hope Journey* will premier in this fall.



SCOTT SPEARS is an Emmy-winning cinematographer and teaches screenwriting at the Ohio State University. You can learn more about him at www.scottspears.net.



DAVID LENT's career as a news cameraman and documentary producer spans forty years. His films include Life Without, Hotel Macedonia, and The 5 Keys to Mastery. He is author of VIDEO RULES: How to Think about How to Shoot, and inventor of the Steadybag, PicupStix, GelFile and LensEnd—accessories used by professionals worldwide. Based in Washington, DC and Oakland, CA, Dave is at work on a second book, Master Minds." www.daveandcompany.us



JOHN KLEIN is a Chicago-based freelance cinematographer (windycitycamera.com), the producer of Glass City Films (glasscityfilms.com), and the director of Chrysalis (TheRestAreDead.com). He currently teaches at DePaul University.



DAVID KAMINSKI creates media for entertainment and social change with community groups, professional organizations, students, and adults. The projects have earned dozens of national awards and have screened across the country in festivals and on television. With a background of over 20 years experience as a teacher and educator, his students' videos have won more than 50 awards, among them five Telly Awards, and have screened more than 200 times nationally and internationally. He currently resides in the New York metro area.



MELANIE BALL, Sr. Industry Executive for Media & Entertainment at AMD



JONATHAN MOORE is an associate professor of cinema arts at Vanguard University in Orange County, California. His most recent film, "Coaches' Wives," can be downloaded at CoachesWivesDoc.com. He lives in Los Angeles with his wife and son.



SCOTT ESSMAN established Visionary Cinema in New York in 1989, moving to Los Angeles in 1995. In 2008, he won a Rondo Award for Best Feature Film Commentary for work on the Legacy Set of Universal's The Mummy (1932 version). His filmography includes more than 28 productions including Jack Pierce: The Man Behind the Monsters, Ten Men on the Field, and Trane and Miles. Essman has published over 500 articles about people who work behind-the-scenes in movies. He teaches mass media, filmmaking, and digital video editing at the University of La Verne, The Art Institute of California, and California Polytechnic State University, Pomona.



CAROLE KIRSCHNER, Director of the Writers Guild of America's Showrunner Training Program, the CBS Diversity Writers Mentoring Program and the Humanities New Voices program, has a passion for helping aspiring writers, producers and executives break in, stay in and move up in the entertainment industry. Having worked as a senior level television development executive for eighteen years (including her posts at CBS and as head of Steven Spielberg's first Amblin Television), Carole has heard over 3,000 pitches, bought hundreds of projects and was involved in developing dozens of television series. Now an international speaker and entertainment career coach, she teaches creative professionals how to navigate the often mystifying field of show business. Through her popular workshops, Carole teaches real world strategies so writers and producers can thrive in Hollywood. Her book, Hollywood Game Plan: How to Land a Job in Film, TV and Digital Entertainment, published by Michael Wiese Publishing, is assigned as a textbook in film/television classes at various colleges and universities throughout the U.S.





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STAR WARS THE FORCE AWAKENS' EDITORS

MARYANN BRANDON AND MARY JO MARKEY

By Scott Essman

NO PLOT SPOILERS

Having edited all of J.J. Abrams feature films, the team of Maryann Brandon and Mary Jo Markey might have assumed that they would work on *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, though a sure thing is not always as it seems in the unpredictable film business. Nevertheless, Brandon and Markey did indeed join Abrams' team on the seventh installment of the world-renowned movie franchise. "We knew while we were still working on *Star Trek*," said Markey of Abram's second *Star Trek* film, *Into Darkness*. "He came in one day and said jokingly that he had just turned down *Star Wars*. We laughed about it. Five or six months later, he came in and said, 'There's a teeny tiny possibility that I am going to reconsider and direct it after all.'"

After meeting with Disney CEO Bob Iger and Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy, Abrams was convinced to do the film, the first of three planned sequels to the original three episodes of the series which ran from 1977 to 1983. Of course, assuming anything in the uncertain world of studio productions can lead to disappointment at best. "Is anything ever certain?" Brandon wondered aloud. "Both Mary Jo and I do other films and projects when we are not working for J.J. Being freelance, we take other projects. Wanting to expand our horizons, we like to do other things. It has worked out till now. I took another film when [J.J.] said he wasn't doing *Star Wars*—I spent a year trying to apologize. I had a long-term relationship with J.J. We were very excited."

Initially, Brandon and Markey were given an outline to the new *Star Wars* film a year before filming started. "That turned out to be the outline of the script that they didn't really go with – the Michael Arndt version," Markey explained. "J.J. and Lawrence Kasdan took control of the writing. When they decided to rewrite the script, they wanted to start over; they wouldn't make the summer 2015 release date."

Brandon expanded on the early stages of the project. "We did get a script, and that script kept evolving throughout a lot of the shoot," she said. "J.J. works that way a lot. See what he gets and evolve it from there."

One unplanned yet ultimately fortuitous event allowed for further evolution of the new film's screenplay. "When Harrison Ford was hurt," Markey conveyed, "we had to shut down for a three-week hiatus in the middle of shooting. We shot everything we could shoot without him. It gave J.J. a chance to look at what was shot and cut, what was working, and what wasn't working as he had hoped. He did a lot of re-writing and re-thinking. I think the film is better than it would have been because that happened. Woody Allen builds in a period when he stops shooting. It would be great if all movies could do that, [but] it's not that practical."

With two editors working on the film as they had done many times previously, a similar format for *Star Wars* was undertaken in the editing room. "It was pretty much the same," Brandon noted. "We divided the film up the way we usually do – each of us took half the film, not in order."

During principal photography, Markey related that she and Brandon watched the dailies together and discussed the scenes in-depth "to see if we are interpreting what we are seeing the same way," she said. "It is a great thing to have somebody to bounce the ideas off of. Then we go our own ways and cut the material. J.J. pretty much leaves us alone. I had the first part of the movie to cut—I did some work back and forth with him."

Naturally, with a *Star Wars* film, many shots require either full visual effects elements or at least enhancement of shots with partial effects, so the editors strove to turn over the movie to the visual effects team as soon as possible to begin the process. As Abrams and his editors had considerable visual effects experience on two massive *Star Trek* films, they had a methodology in place for *Star Wars*. "With J.J., he does all of these previzes of all the big action sequences," said Brandon, though there was a contingency to pre-planning. "He ends up finding it difficult to commit to those. We end up filling in the holes in the visual effects with the visual effects editor and supervisor to figure out where we go from there. Those sequences end up becoming a big team effort in the end and get sorted out."

Interestingly, this *Star Wars* continued effects