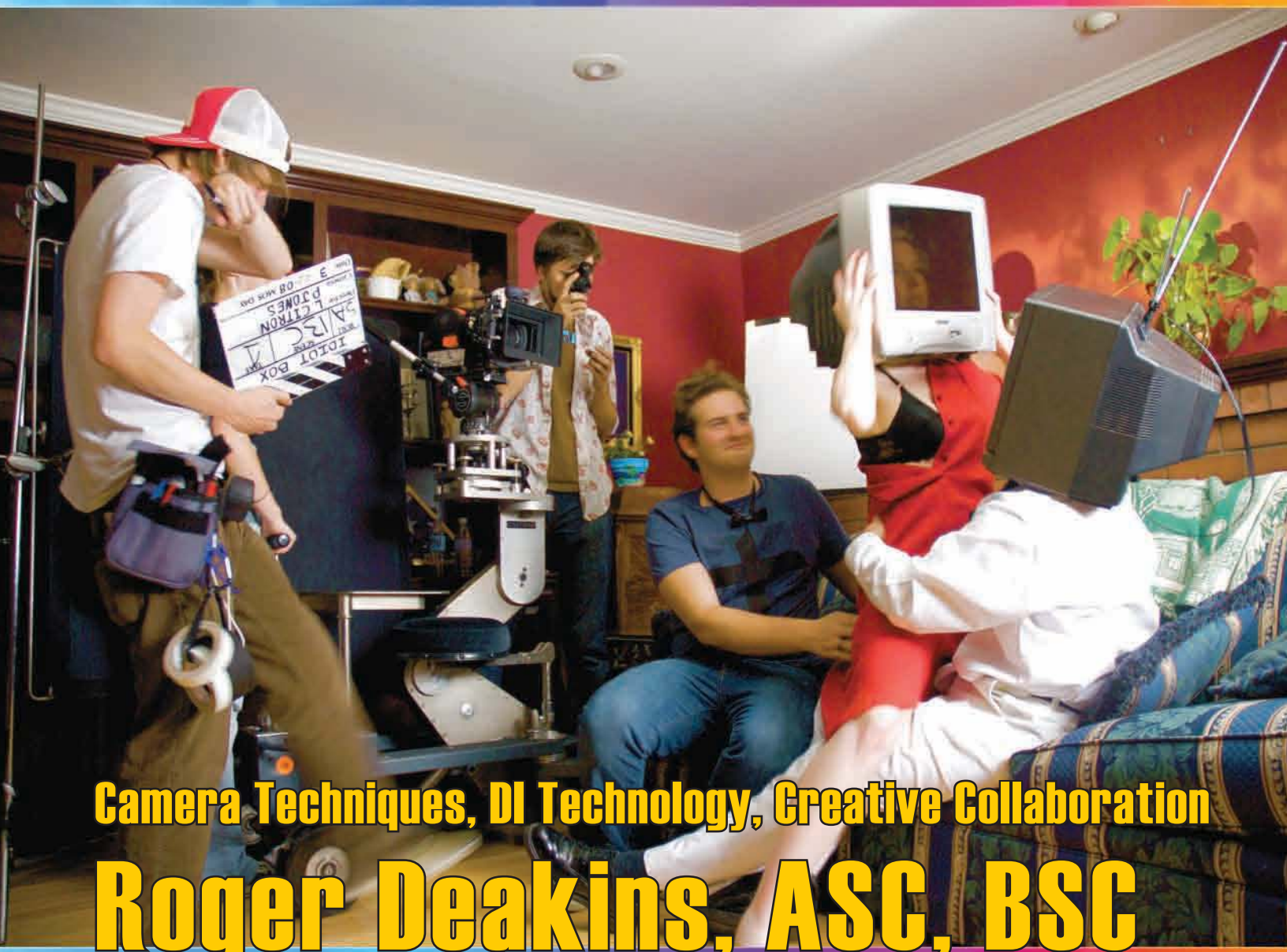
October 2008

studentfilmmakers

StudentFilmmakers.com The #1 Educational Resource for Film and Video Makers US$5.95



Camera Techniques, DI Technology, Creative Collaboration

Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC



Build the Best Facial Lighting Schemes

Critical Utility for Gorilla Television

The Importance of Camera Operators on Set

It Pays to Be Prepared: Tape Your Magazines

An Interview with Stan Lee

Create Balance and Clarity in Your Audio Mix



VIDEO PRODUCTION • WEB & INTERACTIVE MEDIA • GRAPHIC DESIGN • INTERIOR DESIGN • FASHION DESIGN

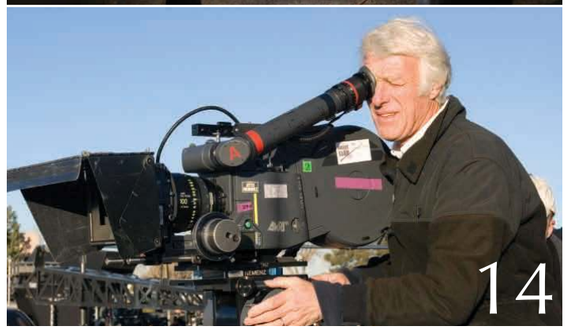
The Art Institute of New York City

1.800.654.2433

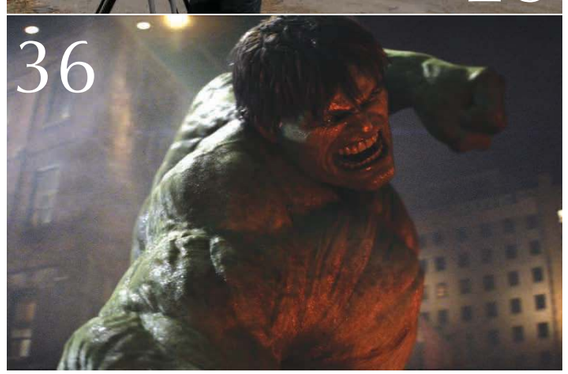
www.ainyc.artinstitute.edu

Table of Contents October 2008









Lighting

6 Light Your Subject's Face for the Most Flattering or Most Dramatic Effect
by Saro Varjabedian

Cinematography

8 It Pays to Be Prepared: Tape Your Magazines
by Jack Anderson

Close-Up

14 A Conversation with Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC
Camera Movement Techniques, the DI Technology, Working with Directors, and More
by Jacqueline B. Frost

36 An Interview with Stan Lee
His Legends Continue
by Scott Essman and Carsten Dau

Commentary

24 Filmmaking – A Collaborative Art Form
The Importance of Having a Camera Operator on the Set
by David Heuring

Production

28 Critical Utility for Gorilla Television
by Carl Filoreto

Directing

32 How to Deal with Scene Stealers, Drunks, Druggies and S.O.B.'s
by John Badham

Documentary

40 Documentary Research by David Kaminski

Music & Sound

42 Create More Balance and Clarity in Your Audio Mix
by Bryant Falk

Film Business

44 7 Mistakes You Can Avoid While Working On Staff
by Pamela Douglas

Filmmakers Networking

56 This Month's Featured Networkers

On the Cover

Lee Citron and crew on the set of "Idiot Box"



StudentFilmmakers Magazine and StudentFilmmakers.com would like to thank each and every one of you who dropped by its exhibit booth at HD Expo last month. It was great seeing you in New York City, our home base and headquarters.

By signing up for our E-Newsletter, you will receive our company news, professional film industry news and updates, and information on industry tradeshows, festivals, and call-for-entries. You will also receive how-to articles, insider tips and techniques, special offers and discounts, and more.

Additionally, if you haven't yet joined for a **free networking webpage** online, sign up now at http://networking.studentfilmmakers.com, and be listed in the global network.

Reach thousands of film and video makers around the world, as well as crew, writers, talent, and professionals in the film, television, and motion picture industry. Meet and work with others who are currently seeking help on features and shorts, documentaries, animation projects, music videos, corporate and television projects, radio shows, recording projects, and more.

For an opportunity to be featured in *StudentFilmmakers* Magazine, upload onto your free webpage in our Film and Digital Networking Community your production stills, credits, biography, movie clips, reels, resumes, press kits, and more. It's not only about who you know, but who knows you. Get your work out there and be seen.

Industry tradeshows are the perfect place to take advantage of workshops and networking opportunities. We invite you to stop by our booth this month at **The 4th Annual Rocky Mountain VidExpo** in Denver, CO, on October 8 & 9. We also invite you to network with us at the next **HD Expo**, which will take place in Burbank, CA, October 29 & 30.

Truly,
Kim E. Welch
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

studentfilmmakers

The # 1 Educational Resource for Film and Video Makers

Publisher / Editor-in-Chief Kim Edward Welch
Senior Editor Jody Michelle Solis

BPA WORLDWIDE

Contributing Writers
Thomas Ackerman, ASC, Jack Anderson, Anthony Q. Artis, John Badham, Adam Biddle, Kevin Burke, Julia Camenisch, Chris Cavallari, Michael Corbett, Vanessa Daniels, Carsten Dau, Todd Debreceni, Jeff Deel, Christina DeHaven, Dana Dorrity, Pamela Douglas, David E. Elkins, S.O.C., Scott Essman, Bryant Falk, Carl Filoreto, Jon Firestone, Brian Flees, Jacqueline B. Frost, Daniel Gaucher, Fred Ginsburg C.A.S. Ph.D. MBKS, Leonard Guercio, David K. Irving, Catherine Ann Jones, David Kaminski, Michael Karp, S.O.C., Sam Kauffmann, Christopher Keane, Tamar Kummel, Richard La Motte, Adam Matalon, Matthew Marshall, M. David Mullen, ASC, Dennis Palumbo, Stacey Parks, Richard D. Pepperman, Mark Sawicki, Myrl A. Schreibman, Dr. Linda Seger, Bryan Michael Stoller, Ira Tiffen, Saro Varjabedian, William F. Vartorella, Ph.D., C.B.C., Kevin Zanit, Bill Zarchy

Media Art Director Lien-Chen Lin

studentfilmmakers.com

Publisher / Editor-in-Chief Kim Edward Welch
Media Art Director Lien-Chen Lin

Advertising & Sponsorship Opportunities:
Kim E. Welch 212.255.5458
Jody Solis 212.255.4330

Online/Print Classifieds, Global Marketplace:
http://www.studentfilmmakers.com/contact.shtml

StudentFilmmakers.com Online Store:
https://www.studentfilmmakers.com/store/

Contact StudentFilmmakers
http://www.studentfilmmakers.com/contact.shtml
212.255.5454 (US and International) 212.255.7204 (Fax)

Subscriptions:
U.S., $29.95/year; Canada, Mexico, and all other foreign countries, $69.50/year. Six-month, one-year, two-year, and three-year subscriptions available.
Go to https://www.studentfilmmakers.com/store

For subscription, mailing address change and distribution inquiries, go to http://www.studentfilmmakers.com/contact.shtml

StudentFilmmakers, established in 2006, is published monthly in New York by StudentFilmmakers.com. Opinions are solely those of the authors. Letters, article queries, photos, movie stills, film submissions, and unsolicited manuscripts welcome, but returned only with SASE. Submissions are subject to editing for style, content, and to exclusive rights provisions in this publication. Advertising: Rate card upon request.

Copyright 2008 StudentFilmmakers.com (All rights reserved.)
Printed in the USA. Postmaster: Send address change to StudentFilmmakers, 1133 Broadway, Suite # 1503, New York, NY 10010.

even **twins** have their own **personalities.**



the beauty of P2 HD in two new handhelds

Like twins, Panasonic's new AG-HPX170 and AG-HVX200A full production quality P2 HD handheld camcorders are as alike as they are different. They both offer a 13X Leica Dicomar zoom lens; 1080i/p and 720p and 4:2:2 independent-frame recording; variable frame rates; a new, advanced 3-CCD progressive imager with spectacular quality; and the reliability and flexibility of a fast, file-based workflow.

Why might you prefer one over the other? The HVX200A features a DV tape drive in addition to two P2 card slots, allowing you to move easily from SD to HD and from tape to solid-state. If you have already transitioned to a solid-state file-based workflow, the two-slot HPX170 offers additional high-end features, including HD-SDI, metadata input, Dynamic Range Stretch and a 5-year limited warranty (upon product registration).

The HVX200A and HPX170. Distinctly different, yet uniquely alike.
Learn more at **www.panasonic.com/p2hd**.



AG-HVX200A
- *11 variable frame rates*
- *4.2mm – 55mm*
- *Lightweight – 5.5 lbs*
- *3.5" flip-out LCD*
- *21 HD and SD formats*

AG-HPX170
- *20 variable frame rates*
- *3.9mm – 51mm*
- *Lightweight – 4.2 lbs*
- *Waveform/Vectorscope*
- *3 focus assist functions*

P2HD when it counts

Panasonic ideas for life

© 2008 Panasonic Broadcast



Light Your Subject's Face for the Most Flattering or Most Dramatic Effect

Build the Best Lighting Scheme for Your Subject

by Saro Varjabedian

Intuitively knowing where to place lights to light your subject's face, while simultaneously lighting your environment, is a skill which will take some time to develop. However, this little tip may be a helpful way to start thinking about it. There is a science to the way in which we light a person's face for the most flattering or most dramatic effect based on their facial type. While there are no hard and fast rules in general, the most flattering lighting setup is obtained when the key light falls on the side of the face furthest from the camera. But at what angle and what height should the light be placed in relation to the subject? And what if the subject moves and how does the set lighting affect the subject's light? These are the questions that need to be answered when building your lighting scheme for a particular scene.

To answer them, let's start by deciding the best lighting scheme for your subject. This can be done by doing a simple lighting test. Place the subject in front of the camera turning their head slightly away. Now take one light which will serve as the key and just start rotating the light in a 180 degree arch around the subject's head and study how the light creates shadows along the face. As you are doing this, raise or lower the light to get a sense of the best height. Once you find a lighting position which produces the desired effect, try adding a fill light, kicker or backlight until you've devised the perfect combination. Now that you have an understanding of your subject's face, you can think about lighting your set and quite possibly use the set lights as some of the lights for your subject. To do this, you will need to see how the Director plans on blocking the actions of your subject. Next, light the scene keeping in mind the actor's location. It may be possible that your ambient light is sufficient enough to act as your subject's fill, or a light on the table can also be your subject's backlight, or a window can act as your subject's key light. You can even suggest to the Director to block the actor in such a way as to use the set lights as one of your subject's light.



Saro Varjabedian is a New York-based director of photography and has worked on numerous independent films, music videos and corporate videos. He has recently finished production of the spec for *Art House Film* and is currently in production on the short film, *Lake Living Dead*. Saro can be reached at www.sarodp.com.

It Pays to Be Prepared:
Tape Your Magazines

Filming in a railroad yard for 'To Live and Die in LA'.

by Jack Anderson

Most of the students I work with these days don't have a clear idea why we tape the camera magazines after we load them. *How much of the camera or magazine must be wrapped with tape? Every camera needs this? Why?*

No, we're not doing this to make it light-tight. If the magazine or camera leaks light, we're in bigger trouble than tape can fix.

The tape serves a couple of purposes. First, it lets you know the magazine is loaded. It's important to be able to tell what you've got at a glance in the hustle of production. Second, the color of the tape tells you the specific emulsion in the magazine. These days, with the profusion of film types, it's likely that you will use more than one stock—at least, you'll have one for interiors and one for exteriors. I happened to be lucky to work as an assistant long ago in the days of one stock only. We either used Kodak or Fuji. Today you might have three or four separate emulsions on the same film. So most assistants arbitrarily decide on separate colors to represent the different emulsions. Third, tape around the lid and on the latches prevents the accidental opening of a loaded magazine.



Let me tell you a little story about taping mags. I worked as a first



camera assistant on *To Live and Die in LA*. Anyone will tell you that the director is a lunatic. He wants what he wants, he wants it when he wants it, and reality has no effect on his desires. We were shooting in a railroad yard, and the director wanted a shot of the train's approach from the point of view of a worm. So we carefully measured the height of the train, dug a shallow hole for it, and placed the camera there with a remote switch. The placement was tricky, since the lens had to be high enough to see the train bearing down full frame, but low enough not to get hit. We had an Arri 2C, then the current model of the original Arriflex. Usually, you would use a Bell and Howell Eyemo in a crash box—1/4" of steel plate surrounding the camera—for something this risky. But of course, the shot had been dreamed up as the director sat on the set, so we hadn't rented one. I used 200' magazines on the Arri because they gave the camera its lowest profile. They're rarely used on professional productions (400' is a more useful size), but I had ordered three of them just in case we needed them. Being prepared like this, even though the production manager may object to the cost, is cheap insurance against the unexpected.

The camera was set up and we rolled it. Something went wrong with timing, and we needed take two. So I looked at the camera; it had rolled about sixty feet, meaning we had enough film in the magazine for another two takes, with a margin of safety. The director would have none of this. *"Change the magazine, @$#%&!"* Or, something to that effect, he roared. Well, you always want to be careful with film exposed on a stunt even when it's not quite right. You never want to endanger the film because that might be the only time the stunt works. And although the situation was fairly well controlled, and although the train had cleared the camera with no problems, it made some sense to reload and to save the exposed film from any possible disaster.

So we reloaded, checked the framing and the height of the camera, and shot take two.

"I want another take." Okay, I had a third magazine, loaded and ready, and we reloaded the camera, checked everything, and rolled again. *"Let's go again."*

Now, we were working in a rail yard. There's no way to bring a camera truck into the yard. No roads, lots of train tracks; and the railroad company was insistent on its rules of safety. So the camera truck had to be parked on a street about half a mile from where we were shooting. I had sent the exposed film back to the truck to be downloaded. It took a while to negotiate the rocks and clinkers that are the surface of the train yard. And, it was half a mile away – and it takes a certain amount of time to download, wrap the film safely, reload, and get back to the set. So right now, we had used up our three loaded magazines, since the director insisted on a fresh load for every take.

But the director wanted to do another. For safety? Who knows? He's the boss, and he gets what he wants.

And I had only three 200' magazines. Each, now, with 140' of fresh but unusable film left on them. And a loader in a truck a half a mile away, and a second assistant moving as fast as he could among the rails, rocks, and clinkers to get me a fresh magazine. Of course, I told the director we could certainly do take four, but it might be a short wait to get a fresh magazine.

"What the @$#%& is going on? Why don't you guys have more @$#%& magazines loaded? You know, professionals have more than one magazine. I want that shot! Now! @$#%&!"

I gently explained about the three used magazines, about having to download them, about the half a mile of rails, rocks, and clinkers.

Well, I think I mentioned the director is crazy. So I mentioned that, of course, we had more magazines, but they were 400' loads, and they

FSU FILM

Recognized for making "distinguished contributions to American culture through the world of film and television" by the Directors Guild of America.

Making Movies.

- *6 Student Oscar winners in 5 years*
- *24 Collegiate Television Awards*
- *Leading the way in Digital Cinema*
- *Shooting 35mm, Super 16, 2K & 4K*



FSU STUDENT Worked on 41 short films while in film school.
Notable Credits: 2008 Student Academy Award Winner

Making Careers.

- *Academy Award-winning faculty members*
- *Industry leaders with 400+ professional credits*
- *Small classes with one-on-one instruction*
- *Teaching the art and business of filmmaking*



FSU TEACHER Story Executive & Producer
Notable Credits: "The Great Debaters," "The Secret Garden"

Making a Difference.

- *Alumni actively involved in student success*
- *Mentorship program with industry professionals*
- *Industry members critique student films*
- *94% of all graduates working in the industry*



FSU MENTOR Producer & Executive, FSU Film School Grad
Notable Credits: "Dreamgirls," "Finding Forrester"

Join the only film school in the nation with undergraduate and graduate production programs that pay for the cost of all student films.
Accepting applications September 1, 2008.

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

www.film.fsu.edu