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STUDENT FILMMAKERS

THE #1 EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE FOR FILM AND VIDEO MAKERS

2014, Vol. 9, No. 3



CARADOG JAMES BUILDS THE MACHINE

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CREATE A PAPER EDIT FOR YOUR DOCUMENTARY PAGE 6

Editor's Letter



At STUDENTFILMMAKERS Magazine, we always love to be the first to announce the newest cameras and technologies. Take a look at three of Nikon's newest cameras, including the Nikon D810 (Page 17). STUDENTFILMMAKERS will be reviewing the Nikon D810 very soon, so stay tuned and check out daily news, interviews, and news bytes on www.studentfilmmakers.com for more announcements and updates.

Another new camera to watch for is IO Industries' 4KSDI camera (Page 21). They are introducing their new camera at IBC2014 in Amsterdam. STUDENTFILMMAKERS Magazine is returning to IBC again this year to exhibit and distribute our newest magazine issues in Stand #36 and #37, located in the Hall 8/9,10,11 Walkway.

Jam-packed with educational "how-to's", this exciting issue of STUDENTFILMMAKERS Magazine will be exhibited and distributed at the University Film & Video Association Conference (UFVA) in Montana, August 6-8, 2014 – and at the IBC2014 in Amsterdam, September 12-16, 2014. Meet us at the events, pick up your complimentary issues, and sign up for free digital subscriptions at our tables.

Our Cover Story goes behind the scenes of the UK independent science fiction feature film, "The Machine" (Page 22). The On Campus department features Video Symphony and Ambar Salinas, winner of the American Cinema Editors' "Best Student Editing" Award (Page 34). Improve your networking skills (Page 28) and internships (Page 36). Share these with your students, interns, and colleagues. Meet this issue's Featured Networker, Christopher Hall (Page 32). Get advice on directing Actors/Writers (Page 4). Learn how to set your DSLR camera for a good exposure (Page 12). Create a paper edit for your documentary in 5 Steps (Page 6). Find out 4 Important Tips on working with child actors (Page 16). Immerse in screenwriting and story development best practices and insights (Pages 18, 26, 30, 31, 40, and 46).

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Never Stop Learning. Never Stop Networking.

All the Best,

Jody Michelle Solis

networking.studentfilmmakers.com/jodymichelle

Editor-in-Chief

The # 1 Educational Resource for Film and Video Makers

Visit us online at
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Publisher
Kim Edward Welch

Editor-in-Chief
Jody Michelle Solis

Designer
Tincuta Moscaliuc

Contributing Writers
Thomas Ackerman, ASC, Jack Anderson, Anthony Q. Artis, Arledge Armenaki, John Badham, Christopher Ball, CSC, Karl Bardosh, Jeremiah Baumbach, Bayou Bennett, Norman C. Berns, Paula Brancato, Al Caudullo, Chris Cavallari, Pete Chatmon, Michael Corbett, Sky Crompton, Jason Croot, David Daudelin, Jeff Deel, William Donaruma, Pamela Douglas, David E. Elkins, SOC, Scott Essman, Carl Filoreto, Jon Firestone, Fred Ginsburg, CAS, Ph.D., MBKS, Dean Goldberg, Jennifer Grisanti, Charles Haine, John Hart, Catherine Ann Jones, David Kaminski, Michael Karp, SOC, Carole Kirschner, Peter Kiwitt, John Klein, Klaudia Kovacs, Dave Lent, Wynona Luz, Monty Hayes McMillan, Erica McKenzie, Jonathan Moore, M. David Mullen, ASC, Ryan Pickett, Theresa Meeker Pickett, Gleb Osatinski, Patrick Reis, Peter John Ross, Dr. Linda Seger, Sherri Sheridan, Steven Silvers, Pamela Jaye Smith, Scott Spears, Peter Stein, ASC, Melissa Ulto, Mike Valentine, BSC, Manuel Valladares, Saro Varjabedian, William F. Vartorella, Ph.D., C.B.C., Tony White, David Worth, Dean Yamada, Kathie Fong Yoneda.

Advertising & Sponsorship Opportunities:
Kim E. Welch: 917.743.8381
Edmund Olszewski: 903.354.4932

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Advice for Directing Actors Who Are the Writers of Their Films and Projects

By Charles Haine

PITFALLS TO AVOID

MANY YOUNG ACTORS END UP IN THE SAME BOAT AS YOUNG FILMMAKERS: HOW DO YOU CREATE THE SORT OF WORK THAT GETS YOUR NAME OUT THERE AND BOOKS YOU JOBS? MANY OF THOSE ACTORS TAKE THE ADVICE THAT THEY SHOULD WRITE SOMETHING FOR THEMSELVES TO APPEAR IN AS A SHOWCASE FOR THEIR TALENTS. THEY KNOW THEMSELVES, THEY KNOW WHAT THEY CAN DO, AND THEY CAN GIVE THEMSELVES THE PARTS THEY AREN'T GETTING FROM THE INDUSTRY. IT WORKED FOR STALLONE, IT WORKED FOR BILLY BOB THORNTON, IT WORKED FOR MATT DAMON AND BEN AFFLECK. IT CAN WORK FOR YOU.

On the job boards I constantly see postings for these actor/writers looking for directors to work with in crafting these films to be showpieces for their talent. It's one of the most common postings you see. In fact, the first significant feature film I directed came out through this situation: "Angels Perch," starring J.T. Arbogast, who wrote it and whose wife produced it. As a director looking for projects, it is very exciting to have a performer who is dedicated to the role, who has a deep knowledge of the project, and who often is going to be as actively engaged as you are in financing the project (or even take the lead in finance and bring you on as work for hire).

However, there are a few pitfalls that are possible to fall into, or avoid, as you go on this journey.

The first is a matter of ownership of the script, not legally, but emotionally. As a director on set, it's fundamentally your job to deliver the best possible movie, and to do that you need a clear vision for what that movie is going to be and the skills to deliver it. If you can't agree on the overall vision for the film with your writer/star, you shouldn't take on the project. But just as no two people are identical, no two visions are either, and even if you are closely aligned on what the movie can and should be, there will be minute differences of opinion, and you need to clarify in pre-production some sense of how they will be resolve.

On "AP", JT and I did a final "script review" together, where we sat down for days on end going through every scene and talking it out, what the beats were, what the relevance was to the overall movie, what worked and what didn't, to be sure we were on the same page in the relatively low-stress period of pre-production. No matter how stressed prep is, there are fewer people waiting on your decisions, so it's definitely more relaxed than production. By giving ourselves the time to do that, we were able to avoid major conflict on set, when the clock is ticking and the crew is waiting, and since we had built a bond of trust with one another we were able to have relaxed, enjoyable conversations on issues of staging and performance as they came up.

Apparently Damon and Affleck held a little ceremony a few weeks before the shoot of "Good Will Hunting" where they handed over the script to Gus Van Sant "officially," knowing that the film would be better if the director was empowered to execute fully on it, and JT and I did something similar.

The second big issue is developing a sense of trust with your actor about your ability to sculpt a performance with them: after all, they not only want to make a good film, and they are hoping that their work in the film will propel them to more work. They are invested in doing good work, and they often are producing the project so they really, really care.

That's not always the best place for an actor to be to give a good performance, as it can lead to self-consciousness and self-awareness such that they aren't able to relax and be "in the scene" with the other performers, since they are actively attempting to evaluate their performance while they are giving it. The best scenario is one where the actor trusts the director to pay attention to the performance, and evaluate it properly and give good feedback, so that the actor can turn off their self-evaluation.

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How to Create a Paper Edit for Your Documentary

from The Shut Up and Shoot Documentary Guide – 2nd Edition - by Anthony Q. Artis

5 IMPORTANT STEPS

STEP 1
READ, HIGHLIGHT AND SUBTITLE



Read through the transcript and highlight all the best comments that stand out to you. Of course, which are "the best" comments is highly subjective and will vary from project to project—depending on the overall goal, the story you want to tell, and the new stories and themes you discover as you read through.

As you highlight comments, use a different color for each speaker, so later when you begin to cut, paste and re-arrange passages of text, you will get a quick and easy visual reference of who's speaking and for how long without having to read the name of each speaker.

NOTE COMMENTS THAT ARE:

- Relevant to your story
- Reveal new information
- Concise and to the point
- Well-said, poetic or just deep
- Humorous

Apart from highlighting as you read, I suggest also inserting bold subtitles at the top of each highlighted section. Titles such as "On Growing Up in Baltimore", "The First Day of Film School", "January 1969", etc. These subtitles will make it much easier to scan your transcript, locate footage and begin to group your comments by topic, theme, or chronology. These initial subtitles and groupings easily translate into editing bins in an NLE as you experiment with story and structure.

STEP 2
BOLD THE BEST OF THE BEST



Okay, you've gone through the whole transcript and highlighted all the best comments, but chances are you've still highlighted way more material than you want to include even for a first rough cut of a scene. Go through just the highlighted comments once again with an even more critical eye. This time bold only the very strongest and most concise comments within your highlighted material. Look for the one or two sentences that more succinctly sum up the entire paragraph that you've highlighted. (Yes, I'm essentially telling you to highlight the highlights!)

Shemise: **My junior year was really good.** It was kind of split between fall and the spring. My fall semester, I think was the better semester. **I just gained a lot more focus about what I wanted to do. I took intermediate experimental sound mixing, and I was learning about Celtic music, and so that was all kind of pointing me in the direction of where I want to go, which is making musicals, and working with bands, and things like that.** So, the fall semester I really grew a lot as an artist, and just figuring out what I wanted to do.

And then, the spring semester I had a lot more going on outside of school, so it was more like figuring out that balance between classes, and life and getting a job, and things like that. And I also started dancing, myself, which I don't **the Open Arts curriculum was really good. It's like we can take classes within film, but also classes in other art forms, so it allowed me to take special effects makeup and**