



January 15th–25th, 2004

2004 Sundance Film Festival

daily news

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(Rebecca Sapp/WireImage.com)



(Jeremy Harmon/WireImage.com)

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thursday
january 22, 2004

Opportunity Rocks

At the Egyptian Theater Tuesday night, Sarah Ellquist (at left) of the group Loma Lynda unleashed a live set from the soundtrack to their eponymous interpretive film, an intertwining collage of imagery and musical landscapes. To learn more about today's independent filmmaking landscape, venture your way to the International Coproductions panel discussion at 11:00 a.m. at the Filmmaker Lodge.

Need tickets?

Festivalgoers interested in attending screenings of the Dramatic Competition films should head to the Eccles Center for the 9:15 a.m. and noon screenings. Plenty of tickets remain for these screenings.

tba screenings:

Thursday, January 22
Citizen King
9:00 a.m.
Holiday Village Cinemas III

Iron Jawed Angels
9:30 p.m.
Holiday Village Cinemas IV

schedule updates:

The following changes occurred after the Film Guide was printed.

Thursday, January 22
Ticketed Panel Update:
Town Hall Meeting: Taking Politics Beyond the Screen
Yarrow Hotel Theatre
3 p.m.

Missing from the Film Guide:
Speak
Yarrow Hotel Theatre, 6 p.m.

Friday, January 23
Ticketed Panel Update:
The Perils of Prometheus: Ethics in Science and Film
Yarrow Theatre
Friday, January 23: 3 p.m.

Ticket Policy Change:
The Farmingville screening at 6:45 p.m. at Broadway Centre Theatres 5 is not a public screening. It was incorrectly listed in the Film Guide.

corrections:

Jennifer Fox was incorrectly identified as Karin Slater in a photo caption on page 10 of yesterday's *Daily News*. Also, Tim Robbins' band Gob Roberts was incorrectly identified as Unknown Hinson.

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(Fred Hayes/WireImage.com)

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(Fred Hayes/WireImage.com)

Giving Voice to a Vision

Film composers must make beautiful music on time and under budget

by John Austin, staff writer

It was just two simple notes played on the cello. One, two, one, two. It doesn't get a whole lot simpler than that. But back in 1975 when you were sitting in the audience and you heard that simple musical motif from John Williams' film score for *Jaws*, you knew it was time to, depending on your mettle, either scoot to the edge of your seat or sink into it and cover your eyes.

So just how important is the musical score to the success of a film? Although it is often among the last of the creative contributions to a film, the musical score can play a truly dramatic—or comedic, or tragic, or suspenseful—role in determining whether or not a film scores at the box office.

"We've all seen those clips they show at the Academy Awards from movies like *Top Gun* or *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in which the music and sound are removed and the viewer sees a kind of carcass of a film," says Peter Golub, composer and director of the Sundance Film Music Program. "Then they follow it with the complete version and all of the film's beauty and emotional impact is restored."

To achieve this level of impact, however, requires an intense collaboration between director and composer. There is no one approach to a successful collaboration—but the more communicative and reciprocal the process is, the better the result.

For a composer coming to a project sometimes years in the making, it is not

always easy to mesh with the director's vision. On the other hand, a composer can sometimes offer fresh insights and rescue directors from their own impulses. Ultimately, though, the composer often needs to check his or her musical ego at the door and be willing to take criticism, rework material, and assume a possibly unaccustomed secondary role.

"Because composing the score is the final major part of the process, it often happens when the film's production is out of time and out of money," Golub says. "Even with those pressures, a director and composer who



Chris Eyre and BC Smith respond to questions from the audience during the BMI Music in Film Roundtable. (Randall Michelson/WireImage.com)

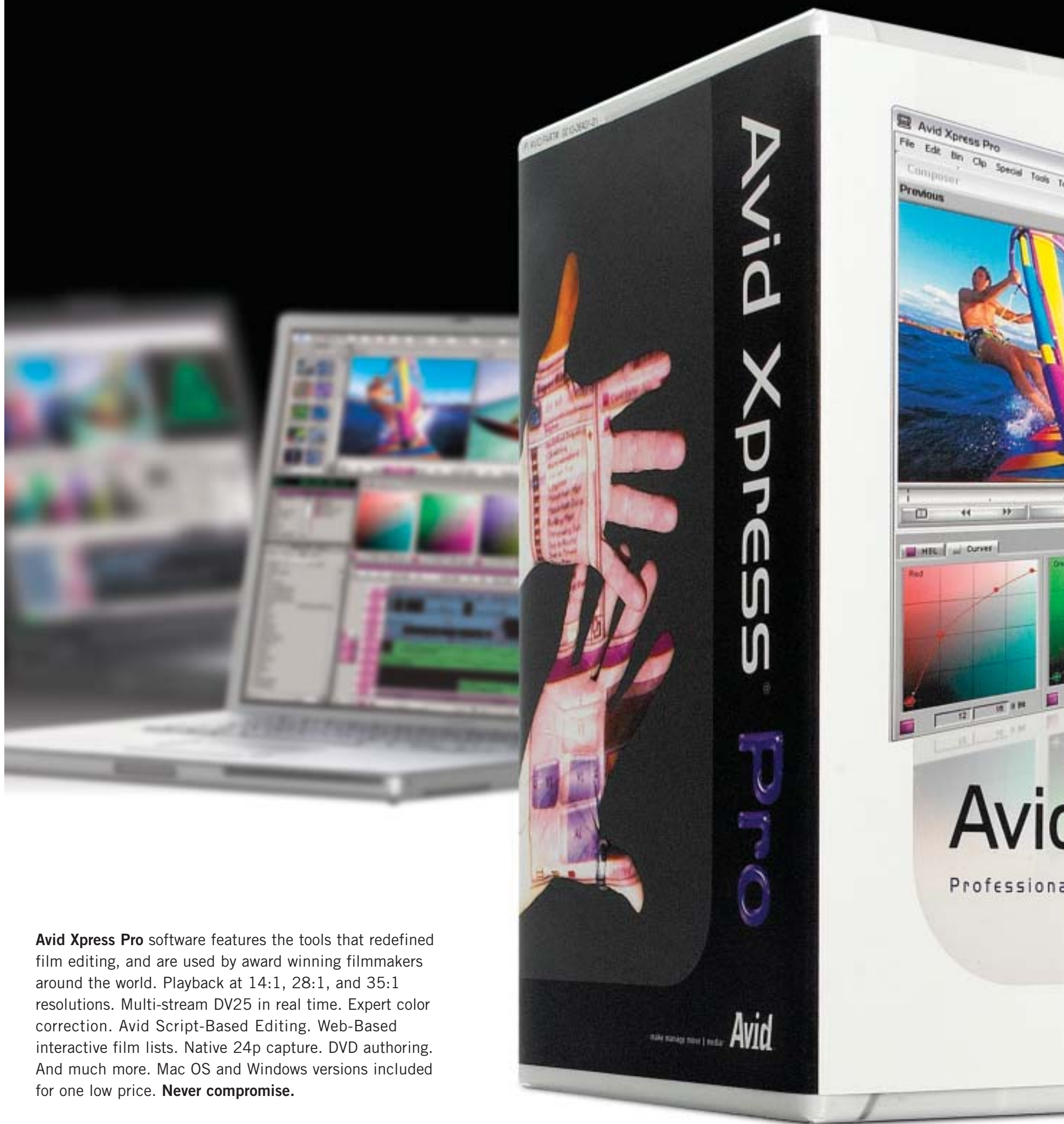
embrace a spirit of openness and collaboration can produce astonishing results. It really is a sort of marriage."

While they exchanged no vows, when filmmaker Nicole Cassell engaged composer Nathan Larson to create the score for her film, *The Woodsman*, they found that, as in any relationship, there was a getting-to-know-you period of adjustment. Cassell and Larson were part of a prestigious panel that convened at

Continued on page 11

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HARD FOCUS: features on filmmaking

Shaking the Money Tree

Cinema's New Independent Entrepreneurs

by **Chloe Veltman, Sundance Arts Writing fellow**

The Film Needs Help

During the making of his 1989 Academy Award-nominated documentary short about a Washington, D.C. diner, *Fine Food, Fine Pastries, Open 6 to 9*, filmmaker David Petersen put a jar on the diner counter with a sign saying, "The Film Needs Help." Beyond begging for spare change from customers, the rest of the funding was patched together from individual donors, a grant from the D.C. Community Humanities Council, one or two corporations, and the liberal use of Petersen's credit card. Petersen is one of growing list of filmmakers who are applying their creativity and entrepreneurialism to finding innovative ways to fund their work.

"Finding funding has been a part of every level for every film I've made," says Peterson. The documentary spent a decade seeking financing for his next film, *Let the Church Say Amen*, about the struggles of a small church community in one of D.C.'s poorest neighborhoods. Juggling preliminary research for the film with writing grant proposals and working his "day job" as an editor, Petersen was turned down by a number of funders, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, before receiving close to 100 percent of the \$250,000 budget from the Independent Television Service (ITVS), a non-profit organization that produces programs by independent filmmakers for public television. But by the time this money came through, the church he had in mind for the film had closed down. Petersen looked at more than 250 churches before he found a suitable replacement. "Every time I finish making a film I say, 'OK, that's it!'"

Whether working in the realm of documentaries or features, funding has long been a creative challenge for independent filmmakers. Even celebrities often have to find creative ways to get support for their non-studio projects.

Fifty Ways to Fund a Film

Even during uncertain times, one thing is sure: there are myriad ways to piece together funding for a film beyond the traditional studio development deal. Successful directors and producers are combining solid scripts and careful planning with dogged patience and blind faith to get their movies made and distributed.

When the director of *The Machinist*, Brad Anderson, couldn't interest US investors in his film — studios considered his macabre tale about an insomniac mechanic too complex — he looked to Europe for help. Anderson's previous feature, *Session 9* (which had been financed by USA Films, now Focus Films), had done well in Spain, so the Barcelona-based media company, Filmax, was keen to get involved. Filmax completely financed *The Machinist*, whose budget came in at under \$10 million (\$12.2 million). (The actor Christian Bale (Laurel Canyon, Velvet Goldmine, Little Women) was attached to the project, which helped motivate Filmax to support the film.)



Other filmmakers are also having luck abroad than in finding production and distribution backing. Three years ago, documentarians Ruthie Shatz and Adi Barash began research for their documentary *Garden*, about teenage male prostitutes in Tel Aviv, with seed money from the Sundance Institute's Documentary Fund. The Documentary Fund was set up to provide financial support for U.S. and international documentaries tackling human rights, freedom of expression, social justice and civil liberties issues. A Canadian television network that had funded one of the couple's previous films jumped in with production money, and before long, *Garden* had attracted financing from European television networks in France, Denmark, Great Britain, and Belgium. "Television-wise, European funding is much more reachable than US funding," said Barash. "Europeans have a tendency to co-produce or pre-sell at an early stage, whereas U.S. TV stations are mostly interested in acquisition, so you have to complete the film before you can sell it."

Yet despite the fact that some filmmakers are attracting financing from abroad, international investment has become scarcer in the last five years. "Foreign investment has dried up," says producer Lesli Klainberg, (*Company of Women*) who has financed films through fundraisers, mailings, and out of her own pocket, as well as by obtaining grants and commissions from sources like the Independent Film Channel (IFC) and the NEH. "People are buying less and there are a lot more films to choose from."

Here in America, some grant-givers, such as the Independent Television Service (ITVS), are addressing funding limitations by trying to make their money go further. Aside from scrutinizing grant applications more thoroughly, ITVS is working to get lower rates from post-production facilities for their clients.

Cable Nation

Many savvy filmmakers who are rising to the creative challenge of financing their projects have made cable a part of their strategy. Sniffed at by filmmakers in the past, cable has more recently improved its reputation, with advances in the quality of digital filmmaking and new opportunities created by such entities as ITVS, HBO, Showtime and Independent Film Channel (IFC). "The negative perception that filmmakers had about making movies for cable television fifteen years ago is gone," said Robert Nickson, professor of film and head of production at New York University's graduate film school. "Cable has become a leading way to proceed with lower budget films."

One of the main reasons, in fact, there are more films on the market these days is because of the rise of cable and digital video (DV). While most filmmakers hope their movies will ultimately be picked up for theatrical distribution many projects start out on the small screen. This is true of many of the films to be exhibited at Sundance this year, like Yu's ITVS-funded feature-length documentary on the life and work of the reclusive artist Henry Darger, *In the Realms of the Unreal*. Although DV has become a standard format in the world of documentaries, it is also becoming a viable



Above: *In the Company of Women*. Below left: *The Machinist*.

option for feature filmmakers such as in Allison Anders' *Things Behind The Sun* and Ethan Hawkes' *Chelsea Walls*. "A lot of filmmakers would rather see their film on cable than have it not distributed at all or distributed poorly," said Klainberg.

Starting Early, Finishing Late

Regardless of whether a filmmaker manages to get all the backing needed to make a film from one source or from many, obtaining funding is a long process. The sheer amount of time it takes to find money means indie moviemakers generally start working on a film before the money falls into place, all the time practicing the ambidextrous art of rolling the camera with one hand and doffing the cap with the other. When Kevin Willmott began making *CSA: Confederate States Of America*, he obtained only a portion of the financing from the National Black Programming Consortium. Yet he began making the film right away and gradually assembled the rest of the cash piecemeal through small investors from the local community. It took him three years to finance the film, which cost less than \$1 million.

Starting research and shooting early is particularly crucial in the documentary arena, where sitting around waiting for money can lose you your subject — as in the case of Petersen and his vanishing church. "Finding funding is a long process, but the story doesn't wait for you," said Barash. "Generally you can jump into the movie right away to get the juices flowing," said Yu. "You don't have to invest very much money at the beginning." As a result, it is not uncommon for indie filmmakers to work bread-and-butter jobs like directing commercials or writing Hollywood screenplays at least during the early phases of producing their own projects.

A Good Script Is The Best Fundraiser

While financing continues to be a major hurdle, it is not necessarily regarded as the biggest challenge facing independent filmmakers today. At NYU, students are taught to place the product first, and then worry about the funding. "It is the process of getting to a good script that is the most difficult part of filmmaking, not, as many suggest, finding the financing," said Nickson. Once a strong script is in place, NYU students are taught how to "package" their projects, bundling the script with a good cast, a tight schedule and careful budget. For Nickson, this is the secret of success. "If one has a good script, a good cast will follow," said Nickson. "If one has a good script and a good cast, then the financing will follow."

But while a good script it is the bottom line when it comes to obtaining funding for an independent movie project, a little entrepreneurial spirit on the part of the filmmaker goes a long way. ~~~

reaction shots!

What movies, or other experiences most inspired you to become a filmmaker?

"A combination of different art forms — music, photography and theatre. I had an interest in all three of them and started as a still photographer, but it wasn't enough for me. So I moved into something that combined music and theatre as well."

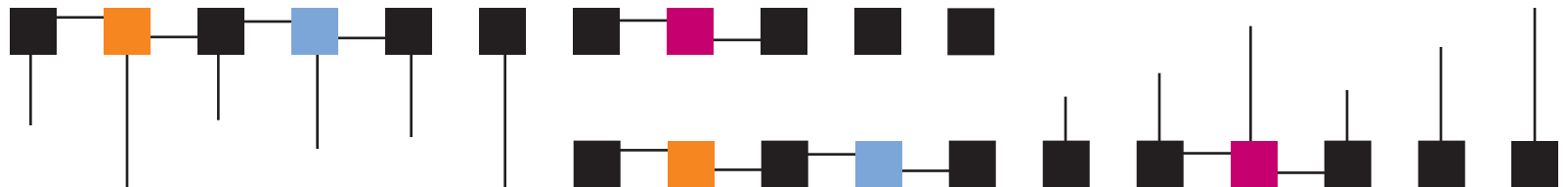
— **Pascal Maeder, producer *A Silent Love***
(Rebecca Sapp/WireImage.com)



"I would say the UC Theatre in Berkley. They programmed an amazing lineup of double features everyday and that was basically my high school film school."

— **Ryan Fleck, director *Gowanus, Brooklyn***
(Fred Hayes/WireImage.com)





filmmaker lodge

Master Class: The Return of the Secaucus One to Sundance

by F.X. Feeney, Sundance Arts Writing fellow

This is going to be very nuts and bolts," John Sayles told the audience that packed the Filmmaker's Lodge, Wednesday. "Call what I'm about to tell you, 'The Art of the Possible' – or – 'Plan B.'"

Ever since 1979, when he wrote, directed, starred, and produced (on his own nickel) the independent hit *The Return of the Secaucus 7*, Sayles has been the most visible maverick filmmaker in America, going his own way time and again with films as diverse as *Baby It's You*, *The Brother From Another Planet*, *Matewan*, *Eight Men Out*, *Lone Star* and *Men With Guns*.

To better illustrate his points on craft, Sayles showed two extended scenes from his forthcoming picture, *Silver City*. In the first, a lunkheaded political candidate played by Chris Cooper tries to film a commercial posing as an outdoorsman, only to hook a dead body with his borrowed fishing pole. The complex nest of satirical tensions in this scene ride a whirlwind of speaking parts (among them Richard Dreyfuss as the ad's director). These became all the more impressive as Sayles outlined, beat for beat, how he filmed this circus with all its cutaways and reaction shots in less than a day.

Before he became a filmmaker, Sayles had been a prize-winning fiction writer, and his skill as a storyteller transformed what might have been a labyrinth of insider-jargon into a vivid and hilarious adventure story. The second clip he showed from *Silver City* hinged on a busy political fundraiser hosted by Michael Murphy (who plays Cooper's father, in a clear takeoff on George Bush the elder), whose house is a literal castle on a Colorado hillside. This castle actually exists – "We didn't have to build any of it" – and moreover, belongs to a charitable organization. "Those people you see milling around with drinks are *not* paid extras," explained Sayles. "As part of our deal to use this castle, we invited the Foundation to structure us into one of their fundraisers. What you're looking at are charitable donors who've paid to be in our movie."

Such ingenuity is a necessary constant, for Sayles. "The lower your budget, the more ambitious your film, the more planning you have to do. The more you can sit down with your people and go over your plans, the better off you are."

Although he is making *Silver City* for the ultra-low budget of five and a half million, he declares: "That's a high budget for me. My films cost an average of three million each. Some, like *Casa de los Babys*, I've made for less than a million and a half. In that case, I shot on super 16 millimeter and then blew the final cut up to 35 by using a digital intermediate." This last method he recommends for all low-budget feature directors, both as a money-saving tactic and a way to create a superior release print.

"What you need to keep asking yourself is, what do I need to shoot this film



(Clayton Chesse/WireImage.com)

well? If you only have \$30,000 dollars, and your dream project can't be made for that amount, come up with a film idea that you can do well for that money." Sayles himself waited eleven years to make *Eight Men Out*. "Once you've staked out your limits and are working well within them, ask yourself 'How

Continued on page 11



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2004 Sundance Film Festival

in the jury box

Frederick Elmes, using tools, and luck

by Matt Brown, staff writer

This is the first time award-winning cinematographer Frederick Elmes has been to the Sundance Film Festival. Ten-to-one says his maiden voyage to Park City will be better than most.

As a member of this year's Dramatic Jury, Elmes is going to screen a significant chunk of the most heralded films at the Film Festival, and chances are good he'll have one of the best seats in the house. Let's face it, at Sundance, the best badge is the red one.

A graduate of the Rochester Institute of Technology and NYU's Tisch School, Elmes may be best known for his work with filmmakers David Lynch and Ang Lee. Elmes photographed *Eraserhead*, *Blue Velvet*, and *Wild at Heart* for Lynch before shooting *The Ice Storm*, *Ride with the Devil*, *The Chosen*, *The Hire*, and *The Hulk* for Lee. He received the National Film Critics Award for best cinematography for his work on *Blue Velvet* and an Independent Spirit Award for *Wild at Heart*.

Elmes said while he is a Film Festival greenhorn, he is not unfamiliar with Sundance.

"I was at the lab a couple of years ago, the directors lab," Elmes said. "We had a really good time you know working out a short and I met lots of interesting young directors and got to see the place."

Sundance is a place where you need to take chances, Elmes said.

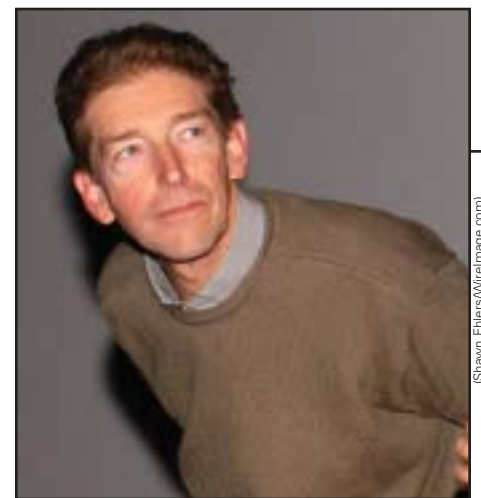
"Sundance is about meeting new filmmakers and... about going out on a limb and trying something new," Elmes said. "This is a place where you will find an audience and you will find support, not just from the Festival, but from the people who come to see these movies. This is your chance to experiment a little bit."

Elmes said he doesn't really think of films in terms of their artistic value.

"I am not one to talk about art really. I would talk about movies as entertainment. I think they have to draw you in and they have to say something to the audience and maybe take their mind off their mind off their problems for a few minutes. I think it is a matter of drawing people in and involving the audience in the story you are telling and I don't really know where art fits in, really."

In his own work, Elmes said there is a sense of satisfaction in completing something, whether a drawing or a still photograph or a work on a motion picture. It is all about doing your best work and putting it out there and seeing what people say about it, he said. The types of satisfaction Elmes gleans the films he works on are as varied as the stars.

Movies are all so different and every one of them sort of comes at me from a different direction. Every one is kind of that requires a different mindset when you view the story. I



(Shawn Ehlers/WireImage.com)

did a film a few years ago called *Rivers Edge*, ...about a very sensitive subject and it was very moving because of the story and the performances and I got to help out with the photography a little bit and it all came together as a fabulous little movie because the director had a vision for it that brought all of us together... to make a strong film in the end. Likewise, the film *The Hulk* was satisfying in a completely different way because it is all about different things in scale, but it is about the same thing in terms of trying to tell a story and using the tools you've got to tell a story. I got to do both. I am lucky." ~~~



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filmmaker lodge panel coverage



Jamal Countess/WireImage.com

David Peterson speaks at the Filmmaker Lodge panel, *Ethics in Intimate Stories*.

(Randall Michelson/WireImage.com)

Too close? The challenge of objectivity

by Tim Curry, staff writer

In film school, instructors urge aspiring documentary filmmakers to get as close as possible to their subjects in order to transfer their true essence to the screen; but if an artist gets too close to a subject, even to the point maybe of developing a friendship, wouldn't that adversely affect the filming and especially editing of the work?

The documentary filmmakers assembled for Wednesday's panel discussion, *Ethics in Intimate Stories* somewhat surprisingly argued that, at least in their particular situations, their films and they themselves actually benefited from getting what may normally be considered too close to their subjects.

Moderator Catherine Olsen, executive producer of documentaries for CBC Newsworld, opened the discussion with the observation that her organization has a strict written policy that no subjects shall see their own documentary before it airs.

However, all the participants admitted they had bent if not broken just those sorts of "rules" of documentary filmmaking.

"I originally went to Calcutta to help with women's issues and was not on assignment," said Zana Briski, a photographer turned filmmaker who co-directed and co-produced *Born into Brothels*, along with Ross Kauffman. "But when I came to know these children, I knew I wanted to tell their story."

Briski taught photography to some of the children and has established the Kids With Cameras Foundation, which sells their photographs to help pay for their education. And in spite of having made the film, Briski said she views herself as more of a social worker than a filmmaker. Her co-director admitted to being more uncomfortable at times with the situation.

"We did get so close to the kids that it was at times hard to shoot them and watch them going through some of the things they did," Kauffman said. "And then there were also times when Zana would say to me 'Don't shoot now' because she knew how sensitive some of the people were to the cameras."

Briski, who lived with the families in the slums, defended her approach: "I had to get close to them because I wanted to truly see their world and I wanted my audience to see their world through the children's eyes."

Dave Peterson, director of *Let the Church Say Amen*, is so close to his subjects he brought five of them with him to the Festival.

"I wish they could have been here at this session, but a local church is hosting them and took them all skiing this afternoon," he said. "But these people are my family. We have shared a deep, abiding experience and I never want to disconnect from them. We're bonded for life."

Peterson's experience became particularly profound when, just two weeks into filming, the teenage son of one of the church elders was murdered. And the father allowed Peterson to film the funeral service.

"I struggled with how to integrate this into the film and not make this be the defining element of Brother C (the father)," he said. "So I put it 55 minutes into the film, which violated journalistic chronology, but not the integrity of Brother C's character."

Peterson also allowed the church leaders to view two cuts of the film before the final edit. "I chose when and which cut to show them, but they gave me good suggestions," he said.

Like Briski, Peterson said he wanted to bring the audience inside his subjects' hearts and souls. "I wanted to render it truthfully, with fidelity, with mindful honesty, so that the audience could see these people's faith through these people's eyes," he said. "And isn't that what we as artists do, to see clearly and allow our audiences to see clearly?"

However, as close as he was to his subjects, Peterson said that in the editing process he actually found himself going too far in the direction of the distant, aloof filmmaker.

"I realized in the editing I was filling the film with interviews and such, but was taking out too much of what the story was really about," he said. "The movie no longer had the heart, the church services themselves, what made me fall in love with this church, so I had to turn around and put that emotion back into it."

The filmmaker has to remember that the emotional relationship between himself and his subject is not an equal partnership, said Kim Dong-won, director of *Repatriation*, a film about unconverted North Korean political prisoners who are released from their South Korean jails after serving 30-year sentences.

"The filmmaker always is in a more powerful position, and must protect the rights of the subject," he said.

For example, when Dong-won arranged for one of the released prisoners to reunite with his mother, whom he had not seen in nearly 45 years — a scene which he described as the most moving he has ever filmed — Dong-won nonetheless respected the family's wishes to only present the event in the movie through a series of stills, rather than film.

"I had told him that he must convince South Korea of his humanity, not just his politics," he said. "He trusted me and we compromised." ~~~

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music café

Dan Wilson returns to Sundance alone

by Matt Brown, staff writer

The Sundance Film Festival has already introduced Dan Wilson to some of his heroes on a prior visit, so this time it is all about the music. Wilson, best known as the lead singer and songwriter of the alternative rock band Semisonic and as one of the co-founding members of alternative folk-rock pioneer Trip Shakespeare, is playing at the Music Café at 2:30 p.m. today. He will perform alone, pre-viewing songs from a forthcoming solo album produced by Rick Rubin.

Wilson's new solo effort, *Ballroom Sessions*, is due out in the spring. Wilson's prior Film Festival experience came in 2000, while touring with Semisonic. It was on that trip that Wilson began to understand that Sundance was about more than just cinema.

"My band and I ended up at a dinner with a couple of the guys from Radiohead — Colin and Ed," Wilson said. "I had just recently watched their *Meeting People is Easy*, where the band is portrayed as grinding like martyrs through the promotional work for their album *OK Computer*.

"So it was fun and kind of revealing to me that these two guys actually seemed to be having a good time. They're definitely heroes of mine so of course I enjoyed just being in their presence."

Wilson is also not foreign to the cinema side of Sundance, having created songs for use on the big screen.

"I was approached to write a song for a Kevin Costner film, *For Love of the Game*," Wilson said. "I wrote a title song for it which I think is one of my best ever songs. Unfortunately I don't think it was one of Kevin Costner's best ever films."

Wilson said the soundtrack work has proven to be grati-

fying, and would love to do more of it.

"I've enjoyed having songs placed in films, it's really gratifying when it works," Wilson said. "I would like to write songs specifically for films more; I'm best as a writer when I have a mission, so I think it could lead to some great music."

He said that when the opportunity to do soundtrack work pops up, it is best when he goes with his gut.

"My experience of having songs placed in movies is that the less of a "big decision" it is, the better it will turn out," Wilson said. "*10 Things I Hate About You* used my song *FNT* a few years after it came out, and generated a huge amount of e-mail. I barely even remember saying yes to them using the song." ~~~



7

Today in the Music Café:

2:30 Dan Wilson

3:10 Jon Brion

3:50 Citrus

4:30 Sweet Pea Atkinson & Was (Not Was) Quintet featuring Don & David Was

The Music Café is located inside Plan B, the Nightclub, 268 Main St.



Top: John Doe (left) performs with Jon Brion. Bottom: Joseph Arthur.

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 London . Dublin . Paris . Marseille . Rome . Madrid . Germany . Poland . Denmark . Sweden . Johannesburg . Tokyo
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Congratulations to all of the filmmakers in the 2004 Sundance Film Festival. We are proud to have had a part in the production of many of your projects. Keep up the good work!

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local boy done good: jared hess



Fred Hayes/WireImage.com

Jared Hess made *Napoleon Dynamite* in the tiny town of Preston, Idaho.

“Vote for Pedro.”

by Sean Claycamp, staff writer

Preston, Idaho isn't exactly a hotbed for filmmaking. So when filmmaker Jared Hess decided to use the town as a backdrop for his first feature film, *Napoleon Dynamite*, news traveled fast around the tiny town, located less than 150 miles north of Park City. Of course, the 24-year-old graduate of Brigham Young University had a great reason for choosing Preston — it's the town he grew up in. Preston is also the sort of town that the film's main character, Napoleon Dynamite, would call home. It's not hard to miss the correlation between the main character and the creator. It's loosely biographical. “Oh, sure

why not!,” Hess joked, in a recent interview with the *Sundance Film Festival Daily News*. “Everyone draws on personal experiences when they are writing a movie. It's based on what life is like in a small town in rural Idaho, the people that I know and the town I'm familiar with. But the movie itself is completely fiction.” Hess had another reason for choosing Preston.

“I wrote the script specifically for my home town because I was familiar with the locations where I wanted things to happen,” he said. “I picked places that I knew I'd be able to get access to when making the film, because when you make an independent film you don't have a lot of money so you kind of have to have the community on your side to get it done.”

The community was truly on the side of Hess and *Napoleon Dynamite*. “We spent 22 days here shooting and the town was very helpful,” he said. “People in town let members of the cast and crew crash in an extra bed in their homes. There aren't too many hotels in Preston. We only have 3,000 people, so finding places for people to stay was an important part.”

The process of making an independent film is something Hess is very familiar with. He has been coming to Sundance since he was a teenager and understands the challenges indie filmmakers must overcome. He's also knows the satisfaction of seeing an audience respond.

“You couldn't ask for anything more as a filmmaker to come here and have a group of people you don't know watch something you've created and respond positively to it,” Hess said.

Aside from the standard hurdle of financing, one challenge Hess didn't count on was the weather. Idaho in July is a pretty appealing locale, but one of the hottest summers on record turned the movie set into an endurance test.

“The heat was pretty bad,” Hess said. “The film was shot almost entirely on the exterior and we had a couple of cast members that fainted because of the heat.”

Hess not only called on some of his hometown connections, but several of his personal connections when creating and making the film. He and his wife Jerusha wrote the film together. While Hess called Preston home until he moved to Provo to attend BYU, Jerusha had a more nomadic upbringing that added a different perspective to the writing.

“In any kind of collaboration, people have distinct creative egos and certainly there are disagreements and people's feelings get hurt,” Hess said. “But ultimately you get better results when you have two people that are very different bringing something to the table.”

Hess also cast his friend John Heatter to play the lead role. The two first met at BYU and worked together on a short film *Peluca*, the success of which played a significant role in finding funding for *Napoleon Dynamite*.

Next up for *Napoleon Dynamite* is a release via Fox Searchlight. That means even more notoriety for Preston, Idaho and begs the question — what was the biggest thing in Preston before *Napoleon Dynamite*?

“Probably the rodeo,” said Hess with a grin. ~~~



It's a family affair. Jared and Jerusha Hess collaborated on the script for *Napoleon Dynamite*.

Visit the Sundance Online Film Festival: www.sundanceonlinefilmfestival.org



local info



Rebecca Sapp/WireImage.com

A brief history of Park City ...

~**40,000 BCE** — Saber-toothed tigers hunt bison in what is now the Snyderville Basin.

~**1600 AD** — Native peoples travel the high alpine valleys in search of game.

~**1868** — Soldiers find silver in the hills surrounding Parley's Park City, named for Parley Platt who built the first road connecting Salt Lake City and the area now known as Park City.

~**1870** — Parley's Park reaches a population of 164.

~**1880** — *The Park Record*, city's first newspaper, rolls off the presses.

~**1884** — The city is incorporated and construction on a town hall begins. Within five years the population would reach 5,000.

~**1898** — City's population reaches 10,000 but one of the worst fires in the state's history nearly levels the town. A year later, the town is nearly restored.

~**1906** — Working for the phone company, Bud Wright spends the winter skiing, a precursor to the city's favorite pastime.

~**1930** — First ski jump is built, but skiing remains predominately a spectator sport.

~**1931** — Alf Engen flies 247 feet on a jump at Ecker Hill to set a World Record. Ecker set a total of five World Records on the hill.

~**1946** — The first ski lift is installed at Snow Park near Deer Valley.

~**1963** — Federal Grants lead to the construction of a chairlift, gondolas and one of the area's first ski resorts.

~**1981** — Deer Valley opens in the area once known as Snow Park.

~**1984** — The area sports 14 lifts with a day pass costing \$26.

~**1985** — The first Sundance Film Festival is held in Park City, and presents 86 films. In 2004, Park City venues play host to a total of 255 screenings during the 10-day Festival.

~**2002** — The Winter Olympic Games come to Park City. Events are held in Park City at the Utah Olympic Camp, Deer Valley, and Park City Mountain Resort.

collection

Classic Revisted

Director Melvin Van Peebles introduces the Sundance Collection at UCLA Special Screening of his 1971 indie classic *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song*. Festivalgoers have one more chance to see the film when it screens at 7:30 p.m. on Friday at Broadway Centre Cinemas IV, SLC.

(James Devaney/WireImage.com)



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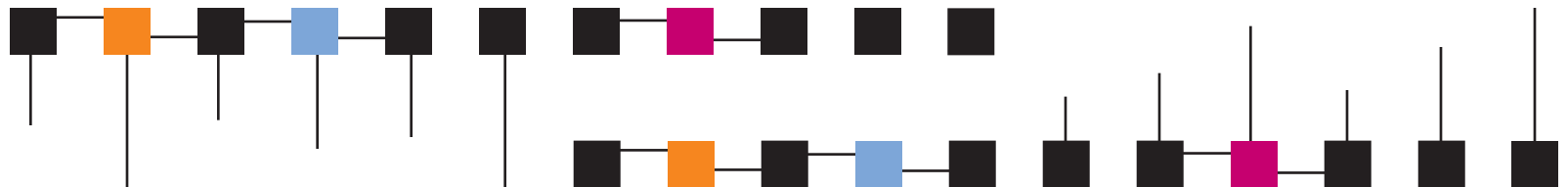
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sponsor profile: LG Electronics



(Rusty White/WireImage.com)

10 LG Plasma Screen monitors let Festivalgoers watch the Sundance Online Film Festival.

The Digital Footprint of Sundance

by Sean Claycamp, staff writer

As you sit back, relax and watch some of the latest offerings that make up the Sundance Online Film Festival, take a minute to notice the difference a 60-inch plasma high-definition screen can make. At past festivals, these online offerings were primarily viewed via small computer screens, but thanks to Sundance Film Festival Presenting Sponsor LG Electronics, a number of digital enhancements are now commonplace for the Online Festival and other Festival activities.

"The Sundance Film Festival is unique in that it is the epicenter of independent film," said LG Electronic's John Taylor. "This audience is important to us because when you find someone that loves film, you have found

someone who enjoys the movie experience. With a high-resolution LG flat-screen HDTV hanging on the wall, combined with Dolby Digital surround sound, film lovers can bring that movie experience into their homes and enjoy the film the way the director intended it."

LG Electronics' commitment to Sundance builds on the relationship the Festival had with LG's Zenith brand, which has been involved in the Festival over the past several years. Now, as the company launches the premium LG brand in the United States in 2004, it has significantly expanded its technology role at the Festival, not only in the Online Film Festival LG Theatre and Sundance Digital Center, but also throughout Park City — with giant plasma screens installed at the Sundance House, Sundance Headquarters and daily post-screening events. LG Mobile Phones are the official cell phones for the Festival, and Festivalgoers can see LG's cool new refrigerator on display at the Digital Center.

"This is still first and foremost a Festival for filmmakers and we want to make sure what we do adds to the festival's primary purpose," Taylor said. "The Digital Center is a great place for filmmakers to find out more about digital technology, HDTV and many of the new digital editing techniques. Our interest is to show those filmmakers how they can use digital technology, particularly plasma and LCD screens, to help them do what they do." ~~



Festivalgoers can watch the Online Film Festival on the big screen in the LG Electronics Theatre inside the Digital Center.

(Rusty White/WireImage.com)



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Music in Film

Continued from page 1

Wednesday's BMI Roundtable to offer some insight into the creative process of putting music to film.

"A director and a composer speak different languages," Larson says. "A director might tell you that he or she wants the music to be a 'little more blue' or a 'little younger.' To them, it might be perfectly clear, but I have to be able to decipher it into musical terms."

Cassell agrees that it is often difficult to convey her "vision" of the music needed for a particular moment on film, noting that aligning the composer's ear to the director's eye is often an exercise in trial and error.

"The music in this project was more challenging than anything I've ever done," she admits. "It needed to delineate where we were in the film, becoming more complex as the film became more complex. It was very exciting moment when we realized that Nathan had musically captured the psyche of the film. He nailed it."

One of the most common problems that tends to pop up and can lead to a disastrous director-composer relationship is having a director who thinks he's an expert on music and/or a composer who fancies herself an expert on film.

Director Chris Eyre—whose new film, *Edge of America*, features a score by B.C. Smith—relies on the expertise of the composer to help him decide what kind of music is needed and at what points in the film it is needed, if at all.

"There were a couple of times when I was working with B.C., we'd get to a particular scene and I'd tell him what I had in mind for the music," Eyre says. "B.C. would say, 'I don't hear anything here,' and he was right. It's about feeling and following the movie, and sometimes what it needs is nothing."

Smith, who also composed the score for Eyre's *Smoke Signals*, believes that film scoring must be approached with the mindset of adding something to a movie, not just coming up with something to accompany it.

"The music is supposed to put something in the film—some feeling, some idea, or even some direction—that isn't there on the screen but needs to be," according to Smith. "The music has to not only enhance, but expand, what is shown on the screen."

Both Eyre and Smith believe that new technology and new techniques are expanding the limits of what filmmakers and composers can put on the screen, as well as streamlining and simplifying the process along the way.

"We're learning new ways for music to drive a story, new ways to do things," says Smith. "New tools are coming out that have the potential to change the way movie music is made."

Perhaps the most valuable of these evolving advances, Golub points out, is the development of technology that allows for the previewing of music to picture along the way.

"Being able to do that can short circuit all kinds of problems on the dubbing stage, when it's very late in the game to have to make major changes," he says.

Golub cautions, however, that the technology has not been invented yet, and hopefully never will be, that can replicate the musical magic that results from the combined and inspired wizardry of a director and a composer. ~~~

Master Class

Continued from page 4

can I make this even better, with what I've got?"

Prepare, prepare, prepare, was Sayles's mantra. "I never go overtime if I can help it," he said. "My crews even complain, because they've come to expect 'overtime pay' as a natural cushion built into their paychecks. But if I'm tired, and I'm the director, what good am I to my cast and crew? If they're tired, it hurts the film."

He offered many nuggets of advice to budding directors hoping to perform on a low budget, among them: 1) "Cast your cinematographer on a talent-to-speed ratio. Get somebody more interested in meeting your schedule than in get-

ting that great shot which makes them look good but doesn't help you." 2) "If you want to really learn directing, work either as an editor or as a script supervisor. You'll have to carry the whole film in your head, and the director will lean on you when it comes to key problem solving."

And, finally: 3) "It's easier to ask a big-name actor to work for scale than it is to get them to lower their price. Because 'scale' sends the right signal to the industry: 'My price is the same,' the star is implying, 'But I'm doing this film *pro bono*, because I loved the script.'"

After an energetic 90 minutes, Sayles concluded: "Filmmaking is a little like hitch-hiking. You may get picked up by the third car, you may get picked up by the three-thousandth—either way, you have to learn to be patient, and you have to know when not to get in the car." ~~~



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how do YOU sundance?

A day in the life of print runners Sean Kershaw and Jeff Orgill

by Matt Brown, staff writer

For a lot of people, a visit to Sundance Film Festival is a leisurely one—take in a few screenings, ogle a few celebrities, ski a few slopes and then head home with a few souvenirs. For a lot of others, however, the visit is a professional one. Some of them are here to sell their films and some are here to buy them. Some are here to promote films and some are here to critique them. And some of these non-leisurely types are here to work behind the scenes making sure the Festival runs like a well-oiled machine. Okay, even most of these professional Festivalgoers manage to find a little time for leisure while they're here, but the bottom line is: They're here to work. This is the seventh in a series of articles, profiling some of these people and, since they didn't come just to watch movies, what the heck they're doing here.

Cars and people part like the Red Sea as the van with precious cargo in tow slams into its makeshift parking spot out front of the Egyptian Theatre.

"Excuse me lady," driver and print runner Sean Kershaw grunts at a woman jawing on her cell phone in the middle of the clearly marked drop zone. "Print run coming through!"

Runners fly out of the doors and pull the 4-foot-in-diameter film reel out of the hatch before charging through the line of waiting film viewers.

"So we will go up and drop this one off and then come back later to pick up what ever needs to move," Kershaw exhales while climbing the stairs to the projection room. "This one has to show in a few minutes, so we don't have time to get everything now. Just the way it is."

Welcome to a Mob hit, Sundance-style. In this version, shotguns in flowerboxes have been replaced by classic blacksploitation gold. *Sweet Sweetback's Baad Asssss Song* has to get up to the projectionist A.S.A.P. for a 3 p.m. screening and Kershaw and his partner Jeff Orgill are on the job.

"It is almost like we're the special forces of Sundance," Kershaw said. "We have the all-access pass. We slip in the back door and drop off the thing that everyone's come to see."

"Without us," Orgill chimes in, "Sundance doesn't happen."

They aren't kidding. These guys are part of a small, closely knit group of Film Festival guerillas. They scream through the back alleys of Park City 18 hours a day carrying the only thing that anyone at this Film Festival really cares about. Everyone loves them and everyone wants to help them out, they are the film guys.

"You watch, people will be in line and they will get excited when show up," Orgill said. "Many of them haven't seen an actual film before and it is really cool for them. Watch, you'll see some folks light up."

Sure enough, when the crew blows out the side door of the Library Theatre, one guy on the path says to his buddy, "Hey look! Film guys! Alright!"

Back at the base — a city recreation center that looks like a bunker buried up to the roof under four feet of snow — Roger Mayer, head of the print run team, is making sure everything is on schedule.

"This is the nerve center of the entire festival," Mayer said. "No one will argue with that."

According to Orgill's calculations, print runners move more than 1,000 film reels every festival.

"Thirteen theatres showing seven or eight films a day multiplied by 10 days," Orgill said. "Do the math."

"We move a lot of film because no film stays in the same theatre. Every one of them moves after it runs."

There is no missing the pride these guys feel in the job they have volunteered to do at Sundance. They talk about the reel bags that the department designed a few years back — that only Sundance uses — and about the fact that they have never lost or damaged a print. Never.

They are also a lot of fun.

"We have what we call the Print Traffic award and rating system," Orgill said. "We are all in the business and watch a lot of the movies. So when we get back we give every one a rating on a scale of 1 to 10."

"That way we all know what to make sure to see," he said. "Then, of course, we give awards. Last year, we gave Mr. Vincent the 'Best Moustache' award, because frankly, he had the best moustache." ~~~



Sean Kershaw (left) and Jeff Orgill put their prints on almost every film in the festival.

Name: Jeff Orgill
Title: Filmmaker
Company: Brooklyn Reptyle
Number of Sundance Film Festivals attended: 8
Number of films you'll watch: 15.
Favorite Film: *Killer of Sheep* and *Drugstore Cowboy*
Number of hours of sleep you'll get each night: "Five or six."

Name: Sean Kershaw
Title: Actor, Master and Commander.
"I got trained to be a swashbuckling badass."
Number of Sundance Film Festivals attended: 2
Number of films you'll watch: 15.
Favorite Film: *Donnie Darko*
Number of hours of sleep you'll get each night: "Five."

Our congratulations to all the Winners, Nominees and Film Makers of the 2004 Sundance Film



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festival calendar: thursday and friday

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

11 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Sony Video Workshop: Sony IMX Video
Digital Center, Production Workshop Area 1, Main Street Mall, 333 Main St.

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
International Coproductions Filmmaker Lodge, 550 Main St.

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
The Politics of Fear Filmmaker Lodge, 550 Main St.

The Sundance Horror Show Filmmaker Lodge, 550 Main St.
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.
Digital Cinema

Digital Forum Area Digital Center, Main Street Mall, 333 Main St.

1 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Sundance Online Film Festival and Online Film Festival Filmmaker Q&A
Digital Center, Main Street Mall, 333 Main St.

2:30 p.m.
Dan Wilson
Music Café, Plan B, the Nightclub, 268 Main St

3 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Sundance Online Film Festival SOFF LG Theatre
Digital Center, Main Street Mall, 333 Main St.

3 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Sony Video Workshop: Sony DVCam

Digital Center, Production Workshop Area 1, Main Street Mall, 333 Main St.

3:10 p.m.
Jon Brion
Music Café, Plan B, the Nightclub, 328 Main St.

3:50 p.m.
Citrus
Music Café, Plan B, the Nightclub, 268 Main St.

4:30 p.m.
Sweet Pea Atkinson & Was (Not Was) Quintet featuring Don & David Was
Music Café, Plan B, the Nightclub, 268 Main St.

The Drive-In at NAC
National Ability Center 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

Case Study: November
Digital Forum Area
Digital Center, Main Street Mall, 333 Main St.
12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Sundance Collection Screening
Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song Broadway Centre Cinemas IV, SLC 7:30 p.m.

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Music, the Forgotten Character in Documentary Storytelling
Filmmaker Lodge, 550 Main St.

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Documentary or Fiction: The Growing Debate over the "Hybrid" Form
Filmmaker Lodge, 550 Main St.

3 p.m.
Ticketed Panel: The Perils of Prometheus: Ethics in Science and Film
Yarrow Theatre

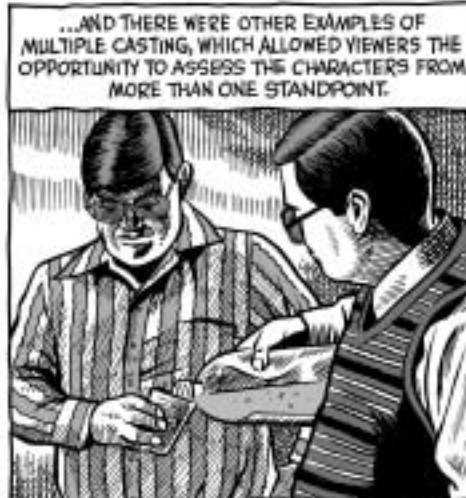
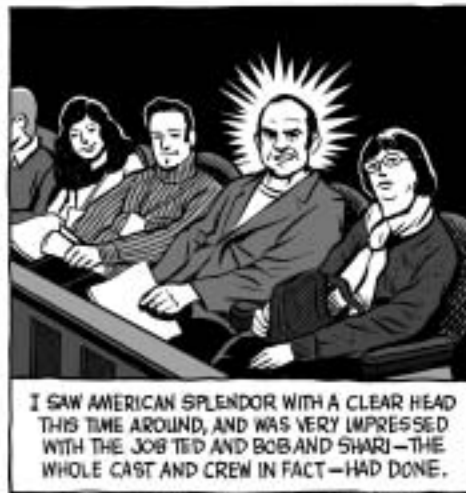
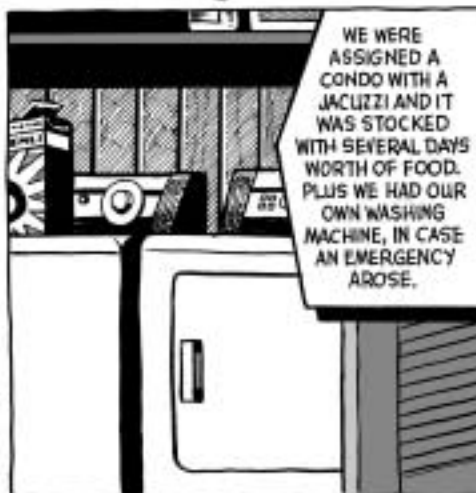
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TBA
Music Café, Plan B, the Nightclub, 268 Main St

3:10 p.m.
Fernando Osorio
Music Café, Plan B, the Nightclub, 268 Main St.

3:50 p.m.
Dan Wilson
Music Café, Plan B, the Nightclub, 268 Main St.

4:30 p.m.
Sweet Pea Atkinson & Was (Not Was) Quintet featuring Don & David Was
Music Café, Plan B, the Nightclub, 268 Main St.

The American Splendor Movie Story by Harvey Pekar Art by Mark Zingarelli **PART 7**



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