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FEATURES

18  THE COVER: CLARK SPENCER
    After 27 years at Disney, the Zootopia producer is now the studio’s go-to guy.

29  FIRST NAME BASIS
    Marta Kauffman talks Grace and Frankie and the projects that make her heart pound.

34  UNCOMMON COMMON SENSE
    The PGA’s “Protect Your Team” workshop debuts in Atlanta.

38  BEFORE YOU SIGN THAT DEAL AT CANNES...
    Protecting yourself legally in the film industry

42  BRIEF ENCOUNTERS
    Short-form content has come of age in the mobile era.

DEPARTMENTS

5   FROM THE PRESIDENTS
    One community, one Guild

6   OPEN DOORS
    Critical mass

8   ODD NUMBERS
    Made ya laugh.

9   ABOVE & BEYOND
    Sustainability and beyond

11  RISK TAKERS
    Make your own rules.

12  COMING ATTRACTIONS

13  MENTORING MATTERS
    A friend indeed

14  GOING GREEN
    Nothing wasted, nothing lost

17  ON THE SCENE
    PGA Oscar Party

46  FAQ: THE PRODUCERS MARK

48  MEMBER BENEFITS

49  NEW MEMBERS

50  MARKING TIME

52  THE BEST ON-SET PHOTO OF ALL TIME
    Rolling thunder

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A tip of the cap to you

The Coca-Cola Company salutes Fellow creators of moments of Happiness.

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We’ve served as PGA Presidents for almost three years, and it feels like a good moment to reflect on where we’ve arrived as an organization. We’ve also been thinking about our agenda for the final year of our term and about the kind of Guild we want to hand off to our successors.

When we first assumed office, we saw the challenges primarily as issues of communication and perceived division. There were segments of the PGA membership who felt like they weren’t being heard. We could see those divisions even in the PGA conference room in the few minutes of socializing before the start of National Board meetings—we simply tended not to socialize outside of our council peer groups. The first and biggest step, we felt, was to get people talking about how they could work together. To that end, the Vice Presidents of the AP Council and New Media Council (first Megan Mascena Gaspar and John Heinsen, now Jethro Rothe-Kushel and John Canning) worked tirelessly to create initiatives and events that crossed council lines, allowing dedicated members from across the Guild to recognize that within the PGA, each of them stands on the same footing.

That effort became the source of the One Guild policy, which grew to become the heart of our presidency. The producing community is broad; it includes everyone from video game developers to indie film financiers to reality TV segment producers, most of them distributed among a half dozen production centers across the country. Even so, we believe that the PGA is big enough to be a home to all of them. No matter the medium or the platform, the essential challenges of story, team building, logistics and sales (or some combination thereof) provide all producers and team members with common interests, and ultimately, a common fate.

We’d like to think that the affirmation of One Guild has given our regional chapters the support and freedom to develop new offerings, whether it’s the SET series in San Francisco, the “Protect Your Team” workshop in Atlanta (see page 34) or the multitude of new offerings in New York, including the very first east coast reception honoring nominees for the PGA’s awards.

Our Guild couldn’t have arrived at this place without the dedicated work of so many individual volunteers—a significant proportion of our nearly 8,000 Producers Guild members across the country and around the world. It may be an ambitious dream to create One Guild out of those nearly 8,000 distinctive, individual producers, but if there’s one thing producers have always known how to do, it’s getting lots of people pointed in the same direction, striving towards a common goal.
A NEWTONIAN FORMULA FOR INCLUSIVE SUCCESS

Written by Yvonne Russo

Force \times Mass \times Acceleration = Results. If you took Newton’s Second Law of Physics and applied it to the diversity issue in entertainment, our problems would be resolved.

We all recognize the diverse world that we live in and share. And now, more than ever, millions of people are rising up to have their voices heard, creating a force and an acceleration that is shifting the zeitgeist of diversity into a catalyst for change.

A lone voice is not as compelling as voices in harmony where the sound is richer, enhanced, more complex and more powerful. Similarly, audiences around the world long to see images that reflect their own gender identity, race, culture and distinctive voices. It is no longer simply a matter of creating a heterogeneous below-the-line team or hiring a consultant to help authenticate a culturally relevant story—these are temporary fixes that simply don’t create lasting, impactful results. Today’s real formula for success in diversity is to hire multifarious talent in above-the-line positions: writers, producers and directors of divergent backgrounds who are valuable assets and investments to any production, providing authentic and realistic portrayals of cultural perspectives that reflect the world we live in.

Now competing on a global scale, media and entertainment technology is advancing in various countries that aspire to have their own film industry, with indigenous language films and programs that are produced on a larger scale with wider audiences.

New Zealand, South Africa, India, Canada and China are just a few countries that have developed their own formulas to attract foreign producers, thus creating local employment, boosting their country’s economy and creating an inward investment that places their nation’s culture in the forefront. As American producers, we must do the same.

When filming in foreign locations, the demographics of the region should consist of local hires who can help overcome language barriers and navigate cultural nuances. While gender and ethnic diversity are universal themes, there are imperative regional differences based on ethnography, language, regional dialect, folklore, religion, sexual orientation etc. that are serious factors to consider when producing foreign or culturally relevant films and television. When we hire diverse talent it opens a portal to fresh and invigorating ideas that offer culturally rich perspectives and authentically vivid portrayals of characters not often seen or heard in mainstream media and entertainment.

It’s a great time to be a producer, especially one of color. The members of the Producers Guild of Diversity East represent over 50 countries with production experience in over 78 foreign territories and established relationships with local teams. The PGA Diversity Committee aligns itself with the most successful global producers in the world who position films and television to flourish in any market. Diversity in the industry is here to stay, and with the acceleration of our voices rising, we can’t help but create the change we want to see.
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LEGO: BATMAN HAS CROSSED $150M. SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE IS APPOINTMENT VIEWING ONCE AGAIN. TIME TO CHECK IN ON THE STATE OF COMEDY.

WHICH COMIC VOICE IS PUSHING THE ENVELOPE IN THE MOST EXCITING DIRECTION?

- Louis C.K. 49%
- Jim Jefferies 9%
- Dan Harmon 5%
- Amy Schumer 16%
- Chris Rock 21%

WHICH GAG/DEVICE HAS BEEN THE MOST OVERUSED IN RECENT COMEDIES?

- Random celebrity cameo! 32%
- Donald Trump impression! 21%
- Surprised drug trip! 19%
- Breaking the fourth wall! 11%
- Scene rapidly escalates so that everyone is screaming! 17%

WHICH IS THE MOST ESSENTIAL COMIC DUO OF THE MOMENT?

- Abbi Jacobson & Ilana Glazer (Broad City) 42%
- Matt Stone & Trey Parker (South Park) 19%
- Kevin Hart and whoever is co-starring with Kevin Hart these days 20%
- Eric Andre & Hannibal Buress (The Eric Andre Show) 9%
- Tim Heidecker & Eric Wareheim (Tim & Eric Awesome Show, Great Job!) 10%
SUSTAINABILITY AND BEYOND

PGA GREEN’S CO-CHAIRS IN NEW YORK PURSUE MULTIPLE AVENUES FOR GUILD SERVICE.

Besides being the co-chair of PGA Green in New York, Christina Delfico has also been a part of the PGA East Diversity Committee. “Volunteering is a great way to combine areas of your life you are passionate about while meeting others who also care deeply and know more than you do,” she shares. “Creativity is contagious, so when you surround yourself with people who have different perspectives, you grow.” Christina thinks all members should get involved as soon as they join the Guild. “Producers create and make things happen, so you get a chance to pool your knowledge and gain access to members who you would not otherwise have a chance to meet,” she continues. When Christina is not volunteering for the PGA, she is the co-creator and producer of an 8K, 360-degree immersive solar system show set in the future. She is proud to be deeply involved in projects that make our world a better place.

Claudine Marrotte, likewise a PGA East co-chair of PGA Green, is also a member of PGA Woman’s Impact Network (WIN) and has worked on creating an inter-guild networking event. For Claudine, volunteer work is one of the most important aspects of her career. “I am passionate about the environment and naturally apply that to my productions,” she says. “Volunteering is a fantastic way to follow your passion and meet other like-minded producers. That’s what keeps me going.” Claudine joined the PGA so that she could be part of a community that supported and educated producers. “It also is great to be on committees with like-minded people,” she observes, “because it is not always easy living a freelancer’s life. I have built a supportive network of producers within the Guild.” When Claudine is not volunteering, she works as a line producer for scripted indie films and television projects. She also produces and directs short-form content for corporate clients, as well as writes the blog "Holistic Producer," which shares sustainable tips with filmmakers.
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EVERY PRODUCER HAS AT LEAST ONE “MOVIE THAT CHANGED MY LIFE.” WHAT’S YOURS, AND WHY?

Hard to narrow down. The first that comes to mind is *The Kid Stays in The Picture*. I found Robert Evans’ story to be truly inspirational. It gave me the confidence to think that I could produce a film. And *Duck Soup*. At an early age, it clued me in that you don’t have to play by the rules. If you’re smart, creative or funny enough, you can make your own rules.

THERE ARE EASIER AND MORE RELIABLE WAYS TO MAKE A LIVING THAN BY FINANCING OR PRODUCING FILMS. WHAT.draws YOU TO FILM AS A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY?

I don’t look at filmmaking primarily as a business opportunity, because I enjoy it so much on so many other levels. If you’re driven by passion and you see an opportunity to make money doing something you believe in and enjoy, you should do it. If you’re lucky and have good instincts, you’ll end up being part of something that has a lasting meaning. As a former advertising executive, this last point is crucial.

WHAT’S THE MOST RECENT PROJECT YOU’VE BACKED?

I’m executive producing a documentary on Bill Wyman, the bassist for the Rolling Stones. The title is *The Quiet One*. I identify with Bill as someone who is naturally a bit of a dark horse. I am also a musician, and at a younger age I played bass in bands. So it spoke to me in many ways.

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES YOU LOOK FOR IN A PRODUCING PARTNER? WHAT FLAWS ARE YOU WILLING TO OVERLOOK?

If you have loyalty, trust and an open line of communication, everything else can be overlooked or worked out. Another essential quality is being willing to overlook my flaws and focus on my strengths but still be ready to call me out on my bullshit when necessary.

WHAT’S THE BIGGEST RISK YOU’VE TAKEN ON A PROJECT? WHICH PROJECT(S) HAD THE MOST GRATIFYING PAYOFF (EITHER CREATIVELY OR FINANCIALLY)?

I invested in the ownership of an infamous horror comic magazine called *Creepy*. Reviving and republishing the comic and developing it for filmed entertainment has taken far more time than expected. But it’s also led me into a journey as a comic book writer and editor, and even won me an Eisner Award, so it has already yielded unexpected dividends. A documentary I produced, *Peggy Guggenheim: Art Addict*, was a difficult project to make and the prevailing wisdom was that it wouldn’t work theatrically. But we decided to take a risk and release the film under our Submarine Deluxe distribution banner. We not only had theatrical success, but a strong critical reaction. When you follow your gut and succeed, there’s no better feeling.

WHAT’S THE QUICKEST WAY TO MAKE SURE YOU WILL NEVER BACK THE PROJECT I’M PITCHING YOU?

Tell me that despite the weaknesses in the script, questionable cast, or popular subject matter that I don’t really like, it’s a highly commercial property that I’m sure to make millions on. Pass.
PGA WEST
JUNE 10–11
PRODUCED BY CONFERENCE
The PGA’s marquee summer event happens this year at 20th Century Fox Studios, as the entire producing community gathers for two days of networking, mentoring, conversations, workshops, food trucks and (come Saturday night) cocktails. We even invited some people you may have heard of, like the exec producers of Queen Sugar, Oprah Winfrey and Ava DuVernay, Oscar-winning La La Land director Damien Chazelle, Netflix content chief Ted Sarandos, Get Out producer/director/writer Jordan Peele and the producing team from 21 Laps, behind hit genre titles like Stranger Things and Arrival. As if that wasn’t exciting enough, all of Sunday afternoon is dedicated to the brand new Producers’ Mashup, a mentoring and networking extravaganza created to give every attendee face time with veteran producers and development execs. Registration rates go up April 15 and again on May 1, so we suggest you sign up quickly before all the coolest sessions are full. This thing sells out every year, after all.

MAY 6
AERIAL DRONE WORKSHOP
This one-day workshop will focus on best practices for camera operation when utilizing drones. This new tool, used by many productions to enhance the storytelling, opens up not only opportunities for camera operators, but liabilities as well. This intensive, one-day workshop, taught by credited drone operators and pilots, will provide producers and operators with the basics of drone usage, including hands-on experience with the hardware.

PGA EAST & WEST
MAY 11 (LOS ANGELES) & MAY 15 (NEW YORK)
MEET THE CANDIDATES
The PGA’s monthly networking events give you the perfect chance to meet your fellow members running for seats on the Guild’s Boards of Delegates. Join your friends, colleagues and would-be delegates for drinks and camaraderie at May’s Thirsty Thursday in Los Angeles and the Monthly Mixer in New York. Don’t miss these excellent opportunities to connect with new leaders within the PGA and share with them the professional issues that are most important to you.

PGA MEMBERS: For more information or to RSVP for events, please consult producersguild.org.
The PGA Mentoring Program has provided a great opportunity for me. I am a producer/director/editor, primarily of indie features and feature documentaries. I’ve earned two Emmy Awards and 10 producer credits. I’m proud of the work I’ve done; it’s put me in a great position to pursue the next stage of my career—developing my own projects to produce and direct. This is a long and winding road, I know. But then aren’t we producers always in transition?

As I was making the transition into development, I sought out the Mentoring Program. The committee interview was thorough and pointed, but conducted in an extremely supportive spirit—they were committed to finding me a great match. Ultimately the committee paired me with a mentor I never expected, perhaps someone I would never have met, but the perfect fit for me at this point in my career.

My mentor, Oren Segal, is a producer, a manager and of course, a PGA member, an ideal guide to help me strategize my next career moves. In every meeting, phone call and email, he was full of energy, a hotbed of ideas, freely sharing his experiences and contacts. His advice is always specific and eminently useful. He encouraged me to pitch him my first project. We talked about it in depth, which lead to my decision to revise parts of it with the writer. Oren is clear-eyed, but he also helped me see the big picture with a fresh point of view. We discussed the process of packaging and attaching talent to projects. Like a great collaborator, he offered me an open door, so I’m assured to have wise guidance available in the future.

With Oren’s encouragement and advice, I took a new job as producer, director and editor of a one-man musical memoir, HAM, by Tony Award-nominee Sam Harris. It played to resounding success off-Broadway, and we’re prepping it as a show for cable. Oren’s belief in me has solidified my self-confidence and has helped me move my career forward.

As the industry continues to evolve around us, it seems essential to revisit our assumptions, to test and retest our career trajectory. The PGA is replete with supportive colleagues and the opportunities to tap their immense reservoir of experience and wise counsel. One of the best benefits we have, the Mentoring Program, is a key to unlocking that knowledge base.

Many thanks to the committee volunteers for pairing me with a trusted advisor, and many thanks to Oren for his wisdom and continuing friendship.
As any artist will tell you, one man’s trash is another man’s treasure and a large production’s “trash”—whether an advertising shoot, film or large event—is a goldmine. As a project comes to an end and the creative departments begin striking sets and sorting through props, the dumpsters and heavy duty trash bags come out. If struggling filmmakers and artists of all mediums saw what entered the dumpsters destined for landfills and incinerators, they might tear up a little. And so the question becomes, why needlessly throw away material perfectly fit for reuse in other productions or art? Especially when commonly discarded items are layout board, foam core, rope, lighting gels, art supplies, constructed set walls, custom props, platforms, flooring, lumber and sheet goods.

Since 2009, LA-based EcoSet has been working on a solution. According to Executive Director Kris Barberg, EcoSet is a “responsible disposal vendor and sustainable production resource” providing film, television, web, commercials, and LA-based marketing events and productions with the means to reduce their environmental footprint. EcoSet achieves this objective through two main service sectors—zero waste implementation on set and a back-end reuse service called ReDirect.

**A ZERO WASTE SET – “STRIVING FOR 90%”**
Zero waste is defined by the EPA as 90% or greater diversion from landfill or incineration. The City of Los Angeles has set a goal to increase its landfill diversion rate to 90% by 2025 and 95% by 2030. This will be achieved through mandatory recycling and food waste collection. Other major cities like San Francisco, Seattle, Austin, New York, Washington DC and Minneapolis are further along with their zero waste goals. Businesses and cor-
Barberg notes that traditionally, EcoSet has operated as a strategic partner with advertising and marketing brands assisting in the onsite development, support and implementation of a zero waste standard for a project. A good example of this process is the collaboration they’ve shared with Target since 2009. As soon as a concept is ready to be produced as an ad, Target contacts EcoSet and adds them to the production calendar. A sustainability one-sheet is included with the bidding specs sent out, and each department and vendor are required to collaborate with EcoSet’s services throughout the shoot or event. As soon as production begins, the EcoSet team is on site to meet and strategize with the production crew on sustainable practices that will endure throughout the entire project, focusing first on waste prevention efforts. The team also provides stainless steel water bottles to the crew as a means of minimizing plastic water bottles from littering the set. Every day, the EcoSet crew is on site first thing in the morning as breakfast is served, and are often the last ones to leave at the end of the day. Their priority is to manage as many materials as possible, including food waste from catering and craft service, recyclable materials and all reusable discards. Currently, EcoSet averages a 93% diversion rate due to their dedicated crew operating from day to night and at all levels of the process.

REDIRECT – “DO BETTER THAN A DUMPSTER”

When it comes to their ReDirect program, Barberg explains that more than 50% of what EcoSet diverts from landfills involves re-circulating custom creative elements, props and scenic pieces that are still in good condition, along with other production materials that are collected, stored and made available for free to the public.

While advertising productions or marketing events can utilize both the zero waste program on set and the ReDirect program after the production closes, many film and television productions can only budget for the ReDirect program.

Typically, productions must budget for disposal tactics such as 40-yard roll-off bins or contract labor to deconstruct a set and drive to a landfill site. If they plan for responsible disposals in advance and request a custom estimate from ReDirect, however, they can potentially save time and money on their back end process. Taking advantage of the ReDirect service includes sending pictures and detailed descriptions to EcoSet or scheduling a walk-through of the set. The more advance notice a production gives EcoSet, the more they can save on EcoSet’s work to coordinate a pick up or receive a drop off to their Materials Oasis, storing the items and then facilitating their reuse.

THE MATERIALS OASIS – “A GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY”

Barberg shares that items, “Come in for a fee, and leave for free.” Educational programs and artists in the community benefit from the free materials, including non-profits, schools, camps, indie filmmakers, artists of every medium, theaters and re-use enthusiasts. EcoSet proudly boasts a re-use network of over 1,000 recipients and a “Free Alert” notification system that informs individuals when new items arrive at the Materials Oasis. One recent Free Alert announced the arrival of a marquis light, a staircase, an assortment of vinyl and linoleum, large pieces of carveable foam, platforms, cubes and more.

While people are always clamoring for first dibs on the treasures of the Materials Oasis, there are a few pieces that can be difficult to find a home for—like a 30-foot tall proscenium arch—or are made from materials that don’t hold up to long-term usage. The company will not pick up debris or anything broken or dangerous. Non-profits like Habitat for Humanity remain the best option for functional doors, cabinets or architectural items, but EcoSet can take custom or theatrically designed pieces.

Production Supervisor Melissa Manousos offered insight into how EcoSet partners with local film schools, providing resources and education to aspiring filmmakers. For example, at the beginning of each semester, AFI will often bring their incoming class of production designers, directors, and producers for a tour of EcoSet’s warehouse. After the students finish drooling over the mountain of set-building and prop-making material they now have free access to, the EcoSet team dedicates 3-4 hours to a mini-boot camp on sustainable best practices for productions. The hope is that the knowledge gained will assist these budding filmmakers to implement their own “zero waste” productions.

No matter the size of your production or the scope of your project, keep these thoughts from Kris Barberg at the forefront of your mind: “With a plan in place, it’s not waste.”

EcoSet is reachable at (323) 669-0697 or ecosetconsulting.com.
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OSCARS VIEWING & RECRUITMENT PARTY, ST. FELIX, FEBRUARY 26

The PGA hosted its 5th annual Oscar party just blocks away from the star-studded Dolby Theater in Hollywood. Guild members and guests packed St. Felix and enjoyed cocktails and food while mixing with old friends and new. The party featured an installation of Mauro Oliveira’s historic Oscars art series made of resin, gold and crystals, and gift bags courtesy of Jolson Creative PR. Special thanks to Meera Jogani, Vincent DuPaul, Armstrong PR, and Whaddyalove Chocolate. The dramatic event of course culminated with a unconventional Best Picture announcement that had members of the producing team and their guests staring at the screens and at each other in disbelief.

NON-FICTION JOB FORUM, SUNSET BRONSON STUDIOS, FEBRUARY 25

The Employment Committee held a Non-Fiction Job Forum that gave 100 PGA members the opportunity to meet with employers from Netflix, Bunim-Murray Productions, Defy Media, Entertainment One Television, Propagate Content, Twofour America and numerous other companies. If you are looking for a powerful networking opportunity or in the market for a job, you’ll want to attend a PGA Job Forum. PGA members should be on the lookout for the Scripted TV Job Forum, scheduled for mid-May. If interested in participating as an employer, contact Eve Watterson (eveh2oson@gmail.com) or Kia Kiso (kiakiso@zazaproductions.com). As always, we encourage our hiring member-employers to look within the Guild first!
CLARK SPENCER ISN’T THE FIRST GUY TO START OUT ON WALL STREET AND END UP IN THE PRODUCER’S CHAIR. BUT HE MAY HAVE TAKEN THE MOST ROUNDABOUT ROUTE TO GET THERE.

The traditional Wall Street-to-Hollywood journey generally involves making a boatload of money, then providing equity financing to make independent films. (In the best-case version of this story, the financier actually learns something about story and production in order to earn the producing credit.) Clark Spencer did it the hard way. After growing up in love with the movies, thanks in part to his early days helping his grandparents operate their old school, one-screen movie house in Tacoma, Spencer abandoned Wall Street after only a few years. Committed to working in a business he loved, he found his way to Hollywood intending to become a movie producer—despite arriving in town with minimal connections and even fewer production skills.

Relying on his finance background, he took the first job that came his way, working in strategic planning for Disney. Spencer admits he had no particular passion for Disney or animation before taking the gig. “Had Warner Bros. or Paramount or Fox or anybody offered me a job, I would’ve taken it,” he freely admits. Spencer may have been looking for a job; instead, he found a home. In an era of unprecedented turnover and transition throughout the industry, Spencer is one of the shining exceptions to the rule. After that initial hire, he’s never worked for any other company, recently marking his 27th year at Disney.

So Spencer’s journey to producing is, as much as anything, a journey through a single studio, and those 27 years are a testament to the scope of opportunity that Disney can offer to a talented and determined individual. With a career that touched, in various stages, financial strategy, Broadway musicals, cable television and studio management, Spencer had all but reconciled himself to a purely executive career when a stroke of fortune saw the directors of Lilo & Stitch turn to him with an invitation to produce the film. That show of trust—as well as the essential experience the job provided—proved to be the pivot point in Spencer’s career. Today he’s among the most successful producers of animated features in the world, with credits that comprise the backbone of Disney’s John Lasseter era, including Wreck-It Ralph, Bolt, Winnie the Pooh, and the Oscar-winning Zootopia, the capstone on a career that’s come so far, you can’t even see Wall Street in the rearview mirror.
SO, HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR WAY FROM WALL STREET TO LOS ANGELES?

I woke up one day and thought, “I don’t want to be 20 or 30 years down the road making a lot of money but not loving what I’m doing.” It just didn’t make any sense to me. So I quit my job and I decided I was going to come to LA to work in entertainment. I couldn’t act, so that was obviously out of the question. I knew that I wasn’t a storyteller at heart so I knew that being a writer or director was probably not right for me. I knew that I wasn’t a story background so cinematography, production design, all those disciplines weren’t really going to make sense. So I thought, “The one thing I might be able to do is figure out how to bring people together and manage the creative process.” That seemed really interesting to me. But when I came out to LA, nobody saw me as a producer. All they could see was a “finance guy.”

PIGEONHOLED IN HOLLYWOOD? YOU DON’T SAY.

[laughs] I know! I tried and I tried. Everybody was lovely, but they told me “You either have to start out as an intern making no money, or you need to build off of your finance background.” I had school loans, so I took a finance job. Disney offered me a job 27 years ago, in the finance team, during the days of Michael Eisner and Jeffrey Katzenberg. That’s where I started my career, and I’ve been here ever since.

SO WHAT WAS YOUR JOB LIKE WHEN YOU FIRST LANDED AT YOUR DESK AT DISNEY?

Well, I very quickly thought to myself, “I’ve found the right thing,” because I was working on questions that were really interesting to me. “How many movies are we going to make in a year?” “What should the budget size be?” At that time, “What types of films are going to sell well on VHS?” because the VHS market was massive and growing. I worked on the project that looked at “Should we buy Miramax?” Really interesting stuff.

FOR SURE. SO HOW DID YOU PHASE FROM FINANCE TO PRODUCTION?

I was hired as part of a strategic planning group, and eventually became the Senior Vice President of Finance and Operations for Disney Animation and for Disney Theatrical Productions. So, Beauty and the Beast and The Lion King on Broadway. I had said to myself, “Clearly, I’m never going to be a producer, and that’s okay. I love what I’m doing.” Until my boss called and said, “Would you consider moving to Orlando, Florida to run the animation studio down there?” Honestly, I didn’t want to move to Orlando. I didn’t know anybody in Orlando. It wasn’t a part of the country where I had ever imagined living. It felt like I was going to go work in a theme park.

So I said no, and about 30 days later he came back to me and said, “I really think you’re the right guy to do this, and I really want you to do it.” If your boss comes and asks you twice, you have two choices: you say “yes,” or you need to look elsewhere, because they’re not going to want to offer you other opportunities. So I moved to Orlando, and I was there for four of the most amazing years of my life. I loved it; it was the complete opposite of everything I’d painted it to be. But most importantly, six months into being the General Manager of the studio, they needed somebody to produce Lilo & Stitch, which was going to be made down in Orlando. They had a producer on it, but it wasn’t working out creatively. They needed someone new. One of the two directors, Dean DeBlois, after interviewing a ton of people in Los Angeles, figured, “We have two choices. We could hire a live action producer from California who’s never worked for the Walt Disney Company, never lived in Orlando, and never made an animated film. We could move them to Orlando and hope that they can figure it out 3,000 miles away from home base. Or, we could take that guy...”—that is, me; he didn’t really know me. We weren’t friends at the time. But Dean said, “We could take that guy, who’s running the studio down there, knows that studio, knows the Disney Company, but doesn’t know how to produce a film, and teach him how to produce it. Why wouldn’t we do that?”

When the company came and asked, “Would you consider producing Lilo & Stitch?” it was like that opportunity came
to me from heaven. I was going to be a producer. Sometimes the line to your end goal is not straight and you have to be open to opportunities. Had I not moved to Orlando, they never would’ve asked me to make that movie.

**SO, YOU GET THE CALL… WHAT WAS IT LIKE, STEPPING INTO YOUR FIRST DAY ON THE JOB THAT YOU’VE ALWAYS WANTED BUT HONESTLY DON’T KNOW HOW TO DO?**

In the front of my mind was that somebody else had not worked out on the project, and I went in with that fear that I might not work out. There was something that wasn’t working, so I had to make sure to figure out what that was. Ultimately, I learned the importance of providing calm, even in the face of a storm. It is critical for allowing the director and the other creative forces on a picture to do what they do best. And I learned that the producer is not the sole answer to anything. It really is all about the people you surround yourself with. I was lucky to have a great associate producer and a great production manager, who I could lean on heavily and ask, “Where do we need to go from here?”

**WHAT STAGE WAS LILO & STITCH AT WHEN YOU WERE STEPPING IN? HOW MUCH ART HAD BEEN DONE?**

They had done a bunch of early visual development art for the film. They were just starting to write the script and just starting to storyboard. So I really was on the ground floor for the true story development of the project. What was interesting on that film was that the two directors, Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois, were also the writers and even story-boarded the film themselves. That’s very unusual. Usually you have an outside writer working on the project with one or two directors, and you have a story team. So one of the hardest parts to balance was the fact that the directors had to split their time between writing, storyboarding and production. They needed to be storyboarding part of the day, doing production part of the day, maybe writing late at night, just to get the movie done.

**AS A FIRST-TIME PRODUCER I’D IMAGINE THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A SENSE OF SECURITY IN HAVING SUCH A CLOSED CIRCLE OF CREATIVE.**

It was nice. In some ways it was just the three of us. We worked entirely together on a large piece of it. For the next film that I did, which was *Bolt*, I had to re-think how to do it, because it was a different process. It was my first time working with an outside writer who’s figuring out how animation works and how we do things at Disney, as well as working with the story team and with a much larger art department. So I had to make that adjustment. *Bolt* and *Wreck-It Ralph* and *Zootopia* were way more the norm in terms of how to make these movies than *Lilo & Stitch* was… the challenge of finding the writer from the outside who feels like the right match for the directors and the story they’re trying to tell. And then trying to figure out who are the right artists to be a part of the show. Who’s the right art director, or production designer? Which artists are going to fit the style for whatever story you’re telling?

With *Wreck-It Ralph*, for example, we knew it was a world of video games, so we looked at artists who love video games. We had an incredibly talented guy we literally had just found from the gaming world named Cory Loftis, who joined the studio right at the beginning of *Wreck-It Ralph*. The minute I heard that he was being hired, I knew we had to get him on the show. And he just blew us away with what he brought to the table. He came from the gaming world and he loves it so deeply. He’s now working on the sequel for *Wreck-It Ralph* as the production designer, the top job on an animated film from a design standpoint. It’s just in his wheelhouse.

When it came to *Zootopia*, we looked to a gentleman by the name of David Goetz, who’s been at Disney for a fair period of time. One of the reasons we loved him for *Zootopia* was because he really has a strong sense of old-style Disney, and he
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loves the old-style Disney art. One of the two directors, Byron Howard, wanted to do a talking animal film because he loved the old Disney talking animal films and we hadn’t done one in a long time. We wanted the world to feel modern, but also have a warmth to it, like you find in those early Disney films. So Dave Goetz really felt like the right guy for that project.

**WHAT ABOUT VOICE CASTING? HOW DO YOU APPROACH THAT PART OF THE JOB?**

We have a great casting director, Jamie Roberts, who spends a lot of time brainstorming who’s out there and who has interesting voices for animation. But fundamentally what we do is ask, “Who is this character?” and “who tends to play this type of character?” We rarely go to someone and ask them to play against type. We much prefer the approach: “This is who you are. This is who you tend to play. Let’s play to that strength.” We also take early drawings of the characters and take the actor’s voice from movies or television or commercials. And we just listen to it with the still images and ask, “Can we imagine that voice coming out of that character?”

For *Zootopia*, when we were looking at Nick, the fox character, we considered a lot of people, but Jason Bateman was always at the top. Nick is this sly, cunning character, but you want to be charmed by him. That’s what Jason is so brilliant at. He can deliver the most horrible line in the most charming way, and you love him for it. When it came to Judy Hopps, we knew she needed to be a very open-hearted character. When you think of Ginnifer Goodwin, she is, as a person, very open-hearted and she plays those roles beautifully. And you love her because of that.

The interesting thing was how they both said yes right away, but for completely different reasons. Ginnifer said yes because as a child, it was her absolute dream to be a part of a Disney animated film. She told us that the day she got the phone call was one of the best days of her life, and we had the best time working with her. Jason did it because he had never been asked to do animation before. In fact, his wife actually has done a lot of voiceover work and she had always joked with him about, “You know, no one thinks you can do animation.” So he was excited to be a part of it, you know, “I’m going to prove to you that I can do this!” And he was amazing.

The interesting thing about animation is that you usually don’t get to act off of anybody else. There’s no set. There’s no costume. It’s a very naked experience. Some people love it because they can just arrive in whatever clothes they want—they might have just gotten out of bed—and just do it and have fun with it. For other people it can be an uncomfortable experience and they have to figure out how to make it work for them.

On *Wreck-It Ralph*, John C. Reilly said to us early on, “I don’t know much about animation, but if I do it, I want to act with the other actors.” So we made that the priority. He would come in and record with Sarah Silverman or Jack McBrayer or Jane Lynch. It’s hard to have three or four people in the studio just because we need to isolate the voices. But we can do it with two. So we would always pair John with another actor, and we got phenomenal performances because they were able to play off of each other. But other people

“I DIDN’T KNOW JOHN [LASSETER] OR ED [CATMULL]. BUT I THOUGHT I’D BE CRAZY TO LEAVE THE STUDIO BEFORE FINDING OUT THE DIRECTION THEY WANTED TO GO.”

**THAT’S FASCINATING. AS SOMEBODY WHO’S BEEN HERE FOR A WHILE, YOU’VE SEEN SEVERAL CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING WHEN JOHN LASSETER TOOK OVER THE STUDIO.**

To give a little backstory, in 1994, Jeffrey Katzenberg had left Disney and started DreamWorks Animation. Pixar was growing up north, and other studios were seeing the value of animation. Suddenly, people interested in animation had a lot of different places they could go. It got complicated. People who stayed got mad at people who were leaving. People who left felt like, “Why are you staying? You need to go spread your wings. There’s all these

**GOING TO YOU THAT I CAN DO THIS!”**

**AND YOU LOVE HER BECAUSE OF THAT.**

**THE INTERESTING THING WAS HOW THEY BOTH SAID YES RIGHT AWAY, BUT FOR COMPLETELY DIFFERENT REASONS.**

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**THAT’S FASCINATING. AS SOMEBODY WHO’S BEEN HERE FOR A WHILE, YOU’VE SEEN SEVERAL CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING WHEN JOHN LASSETER TOOK OVER THE STUDIO.**

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other great places to go.”

When I finished Lilo & Stitch and moved back to California, my eyes were opened to the fact that the studio here felt very broken, and that negative energy was really difficult. It didn’t feel like a productive creative environment. I was this close to saying, “I need to go somewhere else,” when the announcement came that John Lasseter and Ed Catmull were going to come in and run the Disney Animation studio. I didn’t know John or Ed. But I thought I’d be crazy to leave before finding out the direction they wanted to go.

So John and Ed came in and they did the smartest thing they could do: they just spent time trying to figure out the studio. They didn’t come in with a plan. They didn’t come in and say, “This is how we do it at Pixar. This is how you need to do it here.” They wanted to understand the environment. When they had a grip on that, they started to make some big shifts in how they wanted to encourage creativity. They really broke down the barriers and over the course of about a year, there was a lot of transition. I was on a movie called American Dog at the time, which ultimately became Bolt. It was the first project that John did from beginning to end. And it was my first time working with John Lasseter and my first time making a CG animated film. So I’m trying to learn CG, working alongside Ed Catmull, who basically created CG. [laughs] But the thing that was so phenomenal about what John and Ed did was they said, “This needs to be a collaborative environment.” So they figured out how to get the directors of different projects to help each other. Honestly, it’s taken 10 or...

“YOU LOOK BACK AND IT SEEMS SO OBVIOUS. ‘WHY? WHY COULDN’T WE HAVE FIGURED OUT THAT PIECE EARLIER?’ THAT’S WHY THE STORY TRUST IS SO VALUABLE.”

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FROM NOT ONLY PIXAR, BUT MARVEL AS WELL. THAT SEEMS LIKE AN OPERATING METHOD THAT REALLY WORKS IN THE CURRENT STUDIO ENVIRONMENT.

I think it does. I mean, to be fair, if you have somebody who really has a vision and knows what they want to do, great. The risk is if they’re so focused on something that they can see but nobody else can, then that may not be as successful as it needs to be. It’s a process. Zootopia, for most of its production, was going to be a story told from the fox’s point of view, the Jason Bateman character. We did six screenings with Nick as our main character. And we would get the note that said “I’m having a hard time sympathizing with Nick, because even though he lives in a world that’s sort of broken, he’s so cynical. I know why he’s cynical but that’s not helping me to get behind the character.” We kept putting more backstory on the Nick character, to the point where it actually got kind of dark.

THAT KIND OF “PEER REVIEW” PRACTICE SOUNDS FAMILIAR...
Finaly, someone said, “You know what? You have to flip your two main characters. If you make Judy your protagonist and you see the world through her eyes, and if she goes to Zootopia and feels like it’s the most perfect place ever, as an audience we’re going to believe all that to be true, until we slowly start to see the world is not what we and Judy think it is. And we even reveal that she herself, despite believing that she’s not biased against anyone, actually has some unconscious biases.”

That was the awakening moment. Everyone in the room started to feel it right away. And I’m sure all producers see that happen, how when an idea comes onto the table and it feels right, the room starts to change. Everyone gets really energized. The room starts to brainstorm; “If you do X, then Y will happen.” And people leave with this great energy. Had we never gotten together as a group, we wouldn’t have made that fundamental change. That was about a year before we were supposed to finish the film.

FOR AN ANIMATED FEATURE, THAT FEELS LIKE VERY LATE IN THE GAME TO SUDDENLY DISCOVER WHO YOUR MAIN CHARACTER IS.
It is incredibly late to do that.

SO AS THE PRODUCER, HOW DID YOU SHIFT THE FLOW OF THE “PRODUCTION RIVER” SO THAT THE MATERIAL IS SUPPORTING THIS NEW CONCEPTION OF THE STORY? HOW MUCH DID YOU GUYS HAVE TO LOSE AND HOW MUCH WERE YOU ABLE TO KEEP IN PLACE?
We had to lose a lot of the work that we’d already done. The hardest thing was getting the crew to believe we could actually do it. Because it was a change so big, so late in the game, the instinct was to say, “Of course we’re going to have to push our release date.” We absolutely didn’t want to do that.

So as the producer, my job was to figure out how to get everyone to believe we could do it. We were all holding hands. We’re making this change. We’re going to rewrite the first act as quickly as possible. We’re going to get it in the storyboards. We’re going to put the first act up on reels. We’re going to put it back in front of that story trust—that’s what we call the “peer review” group—and we’re going to ask ourselves, do we feel good about this? If we do, we’re committed that this is the movie we’re making. And from then on we’re going to start writing scene after scene, getting them into the artists’ hands, trying to figure out how we keep production moving forward while we’re asking the writers and the directors to figure out the rest of the story. The benefit was, because we knew so much about the world in terms of the environments and the characters, we didn’t have to create any of that from scratch. But we were up-front that it was going to be really uncomfortable. We knew there wasn’t going to be the clear vision of how to get from A to Z. We were going to have to figure out A to Z over the course of time.

I HAVE TO SAY, THE FINISHED PRODUCT DOES NOT FEEL LIKE A MOVIE WHERE YOU FIGURED OUT THE STORY 45 MINUTES BEFORE MIDNIGHT.
I know. You look back at it and it seems so obvious. So you wonder, “Why? Why couldn’t we have figured that piece out earlier?” But this is why I think a group like the story trust is so valuable. You can become too close to a project and assume that you only can view the story through the lens of one character. But if you can allow others to poke at that, then you might open up new opportunities. Because it was the exact same story about bias, just told through a different set of eyes.

THE GROWTH OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET IS MAYBE THE MOVIES’ BIGGEST STORY OF THE LAST DECADE. GIVEN THAT THE STUDIO IS NOW PRODUCING FILMS WITH AT LEAST ONE EYE ON THE FOREIGN BOX OFFICE POTENTIAL, HOW DOES THAT AFFECT YOUR APPROACH TO MARKETING OR EVEN STORYTELLING ITSELF?
It’s a fascinating question. The international market has become so big that it’s wrong not to ask that question. One aspect that we can do in animation you can’t really do in live action is trade out a character. We went to certain countries and acknowledged that we can’t have every animal in the world represented in the film, front and center. Like, we can’t guarantee what sequence a koala bear might be in. But there are two newscasters in the film. And if the team in Australia wants a koala in the film, we can reanimate this sequence so that a koala is one of the two newscasters. And then they can hire talent from within the country, a newscaster that the country loves, and have them play that role and have fun with that.

In the US market we actually chose a Canadian broadcaster named Peter Mansbridge, sort of the Tom Brokaw of Canada. For Canada, it was huge, because their news icon is playing the character, who’s a moose. It was a koala in Australia. It was a panda in China. It was a tanuki, which is a sort of beaver-like animal, in Japan. So that became a way to appeal to audiences around the world.

That said, setting out with the goal of making something that’s going to appeal to everybody is almost doomed to fail. For example, bias obviously exists all around the world. But everybody will tap into it a little bit differently. The phenomenal thing to watch over the course of developing the film—because it took five years to make—is that our world here in the US started to shift. You started seeing very charged moments between the police and the African-American community; that was really bubbling during the peak of our making this movie about a female who wants to become a police officer in a city that’s rife with prejudice, as she herself grapples with her own prejudices. That
was really fascinating.

We went over to talk about the film in Europe, which was (and still is) experiencing the refugee crisis. So they were in the midst of trying, from a social standpoint, to come to grips with that really difficult problem. And so they were seeing this story in a completely different way. For them, it was all about refugees.

In China, it’s the biggest US animated film of all time. And it took off in China because that country is seeing one of the biggest population movements ever from the countryside to cities, especially among women. And of course there’s that moment in the beginning of *Zootopia* where Judy gets on a train, says goodbye to her parents, she’s moving to the big city, she has a dream and she’s trying to figure it out. So that was their entrance point into it. Now, we never could’ve guessed that. We never said, “We should have a train sequence where a young woman leaves home for the big city. That’ll work for China and Japan.” It doesn’t happen that way.

I just look at it and try to ask, is the storytelling universal? If it’s something that feels like the only people who ever experience this are in the US, or if the comedy is something that’s only going to work in the US, or if it’s a play on words that will only work in English, it’s going to become difficult to make it work overseas. So, think about your concept in terms of what story you’re telling. Can that be something that people around the world can see through their lens? And then, most importantly, can you create great characters that the world will fall in love with?

To that point, another fascinating thing about China is the way that marketing works over there. Social media drives it more than anything else, because the country is so big. Advertising is primarily focused in the biggest cities. So, you’re hoping people in the big cities are using social media to tell people “You have to go see this movie.” And in China, there was a tremendous outpouring on social media from women, who were talking about how Nick, even though he’s an animated fox, was the perfect boyfriend! Because he was clever and sly and funny, but at the end of the day, he came to Judy’s defense. They loved that. So everybody was saying “You have to go see this movie! You’re going to see this character and you’re going to say, ‘That’s the boyfriend I want.’”

**WOW. THAT’S AMAZING.**

Hey, it’s not like we set out to create a character who’s the perfect Chinese boyfriend. But you have to think about it. Your job is to figure out how to make something that could be universal, but with the full knowledge that you could become paralyzed if you allow that to be the single driver for what you’re trying to do.
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MARTA KAUFFMAN ON GRACE AND FRANKIE AND THE PROJECTS THAT MAKE HER HEART POUND

WRITTEN BY ZEKE NICHOLSON

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KREMER JOHNSON PHOTOGRAPHY
You can call it an open question as to whether NBC’s *Friends* is the greatest sitcom of all time. There’s no question that it’s one of the most beloved. Its series finale was watched by an astronomical 52.5 million people, reflecting the incredible cultural significance the show enjoyed for the decade that it was on television. The series’ co-creator, writer/producer and PGA member Marta Kauffman, has had an unenviable challenge in creating a worthy follow-up to the Central Perk gang. But as the co-creator of Netflix’s critically acclaimed series *Grace and Frankie*, Kauffman has pulled it off, transitioning from a show that provided the definitive picture of the ’90s TV generation, to another series that’s generation-defining (or redefining) in an increasingly diverse television landscape.

*Grace and Frankie* stars Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin as the titular characters, chronicling the story of two women in their 70s whose husbands (played by Martin Sheen and Sam Waterston) announce in the pilot that they have fallen in love, ending both marriages. On paper, *Friends* and *Grace and Frankie* couldn’t appear more different; after all, the average age of the protagonists in the respective shows is roughly half a century apart. Nonetheless, the parallels in exploring the deep importance of friendship in the characters’ lives are apparent, a theme that Kauffman sees reflected in her own life, particularly as she ages. “As I get older,” she observes, “I find that the relationship between my women friends and me is far more important. It has gained such significance.” The dynamic between Fonda and Tomlin, a rapport deeply rooted in friendship both on and off screen, has proven to be the engine that drives Kauffman’s creation. Her affection and respect for the stars, both as people and as professionals, animates her answer to every question. “They are smart, they’re observant, they’re so good at what they do, and they love each other,” she declares. “I don’t feel that I’m part of a triumvirate … it is them. My job is to get them to tell really good stories.” The show premiered its third season on March 24, and with production for season four already underway, Kauffman clearly has given them more than a few good stories to carry.

*Grace and Frankie* has its sights on an interesting new space for its third season. The initial premise has morphed and grown. “We’re

“WE NEVER COULD HAVE DONE THIS SHOW, THE WAY WE WANTED TO, ON NETWORK TELEVISION.”
in a new phase [where] we’re no longer dealing with the effects of the husbands leaving them,” Kauffman explains. “Now we’re in the phase where they have to start facing their age.” At 60, Kauffman is roughly a decade and a half younger than the protagonists on her show, yet the realities and concerns of life beyond middle age still resonate deeply with her. “At 60, I’m finding myself making decisions in a different way,” she reflects. “For the first time in my life, if I don’t like a book, I stop. I only have so many books left in my life, and I’m gonna read the ones that I’m passionate about. On the other hand, joy—which you take for granted when you’re younger—joy is something that you want to surround yourself with.”

That pursuit of joy, at least professionally speaking, is what led Kauffman to found her production company Okay Goodnight. The group is small, consisting of Kauffman, Robbie Tollin and Hannah KS, but they’re committed to a very particular directive. “We are three women,” she says proudly, “and one of the things we decided about our company is that we’re only going to do things that make our heart pound.” To that end, the company is working on three “dream projects” that include a documentary about Gloria Allred for Netflix, an HBO miniseries adaptation of Karen Joy Fowler’s novel *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves* with Natalie Portman attached, and a series for Amazon currently entitled *Emmis*, with Etan Cohen (*Tropic Thunder*) set to write and direct the pilot.

Producer Marta Kauffman watches a scene unfold on the set of *Grace and Frankie*.
comes with some particular production challenges. "It’s hard to get cast, because they don’t necessarily want to do an arc on this, when they could get a "real job" on something else," Kauffman jokes. "And we are unfortunate to be working over pilot season [for season four of Grace and Frankie], so it is really difficult to get directors and cast. Netflix isn’t seasonal like other networks. You go when it’s time to go. You take this much hiatus and then you go again." A secondary challenge, specific to Grace and Frankie is, again, an older core cast whose stamina plays a factor from a production standpoint. "We have a cast who isn’t young," she observes, "and can only do so many hours. [Our cast and crew] work long hard days, but 10 hours is about our limit, when many shows have a 12-hour limit. So that puts some constraints on how many shots we can get." But despite all that, Kauffman says she wouldn’t change it for the world, observing that, "We could never have done this show, the way we wanted to, on network television."

With Friends behind her, a number of exciting projects ahead, and Grace and Frankie currently occupying the majority of her attention, Kauffman seems to have reached a place of genuine professional fulfillment. And while her skills as a writer may have given her career its start, it is her efforts as a producer that she says maintain a special place in her work life. "My favorite part of my job is producing," she smiles. "It is an extraordinary collaborative process. I get the opportunity to be creative in areas that aren’t as much my day-to-day. I’m not a costume designer, but boy is it fun for me to say, ‘The character in this moment, this is what she’s feeling—does this jacket feel too bright for that?’"

It may be that affinity for collaboration that has driven the success of Kauffman’s television projects. But at the end of the day, she feels the success of her shows will be best measured by the warmth that people feel for them. How much affection do audiences maintain for her characters? Consider that most of us are on a first-name basis with Grace and Frankie, Ross and Rachel, Monica and Chandler and the rest of Kauffman’s extended gang. Her characters are more than just Friends—they’re friends. And beyond the laughs that they’ve provided over the years, the bigger and better payoff remains the anticipation of who Kauffman will introduce us to next.
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“NO... NO. WE NEED A STUNT MAN,” producer/director John Boorman told actor Burt Reynolds on the set of Deliverance. Reynolds had volunteered to do the stunt himself in a scene where his character Lewis rides his canoe over a waterfall. “We’ll just use a dummy! We’ll just throw a dummy over,” Boorman insisted. A young Reynolds fought to do the stunt himself and as expected, it led to injury. Boorman was at his bedside when he woke. “How’d it look?” Reynolds asked. “It looked like a dummy falling over a waterfall” replied Boorman.

Producer Mark Shelton shared this infamous story with over 75 members of the Georgia film & television community at the inaugural Producers Guild of America “Protect Your Team” Safety Task Force event on February 11th, 2017. “What does it mean to be safe?” Addressing this question, the event was designed for producing team members to empower them with the knowledge to be leading advocates for production safety. A safe production starts at the top.

The event was hosted at Eagle Rock Studios just outside of Atlanta, thanks to PGA Member and Eagle Rock Studios VP of Studio Operations Beth Talbert. Via a discussion-based format, four production safety experts led producers through recommended practices for developing a safety plan, highlighting the producer’s
IATSE’s Kent Jorgensen addresses a packed house at Eagle Rock Studios.
role as part of the safety team, as well as how to recognize and correct hazards. The event likewise included a thorough briefing on support resources available locally. The goal: to keep producers, cast and crew safe on the set.

Speakers included IATSE Safety Committee Chair Kent Jorgensen; Contract Services Vice President for Production Affairs and Safety, Matt Antonucci (along with Jorgensen, also a Co-Chair of the Industry-Wide Labor-Management Safety Committee); Margaret Burke, the Regional Director of Production Safety for 20th Century Fox; and independent producer and OSHA-authorized safety instructor Mark Shelton. Representatives from the community, including Jenny Houlroyd of the Georgia Tech Research Institute as well as Trish Taylor from the Georgia Production Partnership, contributed to the conversation.

Despite being the latest critical buzzword, safety is not a new topic for the entertainment industry. The Industry-Wide Labor-Management Safety Committee was formed in 1965 and is comprised of guild, union, and management representatives active in industry safety and health programs. They are responsible for researching, writing and making available the Safety Bulletins, seen attached to callsheets on many productions. These bulletins are recommended guidelines for safe practices on a set and cover both overarching concepts such as general safety as well as more specific high-hazard departments such as working with helicopters and airplanes.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was established in 1971 as a result of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. A part of the US Department of Labor, OSHA is tasked with assuring safe and healthful working conditions by setting and enforcing standards for all employers and their workers, including producers of film and television. Many Safety Bulletins have OSHA standards at their core and blend entertainment industry practices with government standards for a safe workplace.

In the 1970s, Contract Services Administration Trust Fund (CSATF) was created as a way to help educate filmmaking craftsmen and women through various programs for the motion picture and television industry. Around the mid 1990s, the studios of the AMPTP, as part of their collective bargaining agreement with IATSE and other entertainment craft organizations, created a voluntary safety program through CSATF. It wasn’t until the mid 2000’s that Contract Services required a mandatory safety training program for IATSE signatory productions. The Safety Pass program was created in collaboration with the Industry-Wide Labor-Management Safety Committee “as a means of addressing the OSHA requirements that employees be trained (and the training documented) in the safe use of equipment and work practices on their job.”

IATSE crew employed on signatory productions are required to take these special courses before they can be employed.

However, there is a substantial knowledge gap between the trained union crews and members of the producing community. The PGA saw the need for safety education for producers and their teams, addressing the issues from the producer’s perspective. On any production, it is vital that the cast and crew know that the producer is looking out for them and their well-being. They want to trust the person they are working for and know that they will not be unknowingly put in harm’s way. Union crews have been trained to recognize hazardous situations; would you recognize one on your set? Do you know how to protect your team? Members of the PGA Atlanta chapter do.

Safety demands can seem daunting. How can you know all of the laws and proper safety
MEASURES FOR EVERY POSSIBLE SITUATION
all the time? In short, hire an expert, use
common sense and plan for Murphy. A
basic understanding of how to recognize
and correct an unsafe situation is essential
knowledge for a responsible producer to
make reasonable decisions. Are you shoot-
ing exteriors on a hot day? Provide shade
and water. Are you working on roadways?
Set up lane closures and provide reflective
vests. Are there local poisonous indige-
nous critters in abundance? Hire a removal
company to clear the area you are filming.
The script takes place at sea? Hire a
marine coordinator to handle the logistics.
Need the character to ride a canoe over a
waterfall? For God’s sake, use a dummy in-
stead. Production is a training ground for
adapting to constant change. No two days
are the same. Plan for everything to go
right; be prepared for it all to go wrong. A
typical production day goes in a direction
you didn’t expect. Have a safety plan for
change. Develop your eye for safety and
encourage your cast and crew to bring their
concerns to your attention.

The PGA Safety Task force has compiled
an ongoing list of helpful resource and
information links, available on the Guild’s
website at producersguild.org/page/Safety.
The “Protect Your Team” seminar was
additionally sponsored by MBS Equipment
Co., Crazy Legs Productions and Decide
Dekalb and was produced by PGA Atlanta
Chapter Vice Chair Scott Thigpen as well as
Melissa Friedman and Jennifer Haire, Co-
Chairs of the PGA Safety Task Force.
The PGA Safety Task Force is currently
developing a follow up program with an
additional emphasis on doc/non-fiction/
reality programming to be held second
quarter 2017. — SCOTT THIGPEN

PGA ATLANTA: THE ORIGIN STORY

It was a November evening in 2009, when a handful
of producers found themselves in the backroom
of Manuel’s Tavern, an Atlanta institution where
politicians, journalists and artists have been gathering
since 1956. We came together that night at the request
of our colleague, Tom Cappello, who pitched us the
idea of starting a PGA chapter right here in the very
heart of the South. Tom went onto say there was a
fellow by the name of Vance who was coming to town
who could explain things further. Soon after, we found
ourselves listening, beers in hand, while Vance Van
Petten expounded on the benefits of PGA membership
and the virtues of becoming a part of this national
organization. He explained that the PGA’s mission
was to protect and promote people just like us. We
ate it up, hungry for the camaraderie and professional
support. Weeks later, many of us met again and filled
out our PGA applications together. And by April 2010,
the vetting was completed and the charter members
of the PGA Atlanta chapter had been accepted into
the Guild. We had become something; we just didn’t
fully know what...yet. There were less than a dozen of
us. The start was slow going at first, but we eventually
found our way, with guidance from Mitzie Rothzied in
the PGA East office, and through the encouragement
of visiting members like Nelle Nugent, Gale Anne
Hurd and Lydia Dean Pilcher. In the years since, we
have elected chapter officers, formed committees,
and organized many outstanding events, including
the “Protect Your Team” safety workshop. Today, the
Atlanta chapter is 100 members strong with a steady
stream of networking opportunities, educational
workshops and panel discussions. And like the rest
of the production community in Atlanta, we see
boundless opportunities ahead. — SCOTT THIGPEN
BEFORE YOU SIGN THAT DEAL AT CANNES...

PROTECTING YOURSELF LEGALLY IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

WRITTEN BY NEVILLE JOHNSON & DOUGLAS JOHNSON

ILLUSTRATED BY AJAY PECKHAM
We litigate controversies on behalf of producers, distributors, writers, actors, directors, talent, and independent film companies. We frequently sue the major studios on behalf of talent and independent producers. Here are some common sense steps you can take to protect your interests in a competitive and sometimes unscrupulous marketplace.

**GET ALL AGREEMENTS IN WRITING.** Film legend Samuel Goldwyn once said, “A verbal contract isn’t worth the paper it’s written on.” That’s not true. Oral contracts are just as enforceable; they’re just much more difficult to prove. Get it in writing as best you can, as soon as you can. We have seen many cases based on handshake agreements that could have been avoided with a simple written contract. We have seen this especially in situations where one party is raising money for another, typically investment in a film. The investor is obtained, and thereafter, details of the deal become fuzzy between or among the parties because there is no clear documentation. But the truth is, a sound recording of the parties agreeing on an iPhone constitutes a writing. Voicemail can provide salient confirmation. Always confirm details and understandings of any deal with relevant parties so there is some kind of record. Send follow-up emails and letters that state the deal agreed upon, as this might later become relevant and important evidence that there was an agreement. As soon as possible, establish what the terms of the deal are: What will be the respective roles and credits of the parties? How will decisions be made? Most importantly, create a paper trail, by email and in writing. A contract will not be found binding if the essential terms of the contract have not been agreed upon. The more evidence in writing regarding these terms, the better for the individual bringing suit, often the producer.

**ESTABLISH A FIDUCIARY DUTY.** We have seen situations where producers worked on a project, but couldn’t get it going and ultimately stopped working on it. What happens to the underlying intellectual property? Can one producer make the project without the other and if so, does the other producer get compensated? What if there arises a similar project but brought separately and subsequently to one of the producers? Is a fiduciary duty implicated in such cases? Make clear who will have what rights in such situations.

Owing a fiduciary duty means having a relationship that requires full disclosure and no secret dealings. Attorneys, doctors, accountants owe them to their clients. For partners and those in a joint venture (such as to make a movie), whether a fiduciary duty is determined as owed is a question of fact, if it is not made clear from the paperwork or other evidence. In the event of a breach of fiduciary duty, punitive damages can be assessed, and individuals can also obtain damages for emotional distress (for example, for anger, dismay or frustration).

Under California and New York law, there is no fiduciary duty for a failure to pay net profits; the damages are purely contractual. Thus, a shrewd payee will seek to have a fiduciary duty established when monies are to be collected and paid from future sales. If the producer’s sales agent or distributor wants the deal badly enough, they may agree to this term.

**DEFINE TERMS AND PENALTIES.** We undertake a lot of litigation with producers’ sales organizations and foreign...
BEFORE YOU SIGN THAT DEAL AT CANNES...

distributors. Typically, claims are made for failure to account and pay. What are the terms/penalties in such situations? Producers should consider termination rights of the distributor who fails to comply with the contract, and the elimination of future charges and fees.

Will there be minimum guarantees in foreign territories? We’ve seen situations where the producer’s sales agent did not comply, making deals below the standard. What are the penalties? Does the film revert to the producer? Is there a cure period, say 30 days? (These are typically found in agreements.)

A common complaint of producers is that a sales agent has unfairly billed up and charged costs for attending festivals and promotions for the film. Their accounting usually does not delineate the charges in detail. Producers should require that breakdown as well as determine a cap on expenses and a mechanism to challenge the same, preferably before they are incurred.

Likewise, if a slate of films is being sold in a package, a producer will want to ensure a fair allocation of the revenues and advance being paid. Unfair allocations is a common claim in disputes. A producer should make certain to be informed, comment on and participate in negotiations if this occurs.

What happens if there is a bankruptcy? In that event, the producer should require an immediate end to any agreement. This should apply to foreign distributors as well.

ESTABLISH THE VENUE. In the event of a dispute, the venue where the dispute will be adjudicated needs to be defined in the agreement. We suggest that the city or “home court” of the contracting party is best. Otherwise, there are travel costs associated, as well as the possibility of being “hometowned,” a state of disadvantage that exists when one side and its attorneys are more wired into the local legal process than the other. The parties need to specify where the venue will be. Otherwise it will be in one of the jurisdictions where one of the parties resides—probably the one with more leverage. In international agreements, they must consider which country the dispute will be adjudicated in. The party fighting will surely argue for its country. A savvy producer will negotiate the venue for jurisdiction, including the country and the city.

DETERMINE THE FORUM FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION. Will it be the courts of one of the parties, or arbitration? Many contracts provide the forum and this is becoming an increasingly controversial problem. In foreign sales agreements, the Independent Film & Television Alliance (IFTA) arbitration process is commonly required. This makes good sense for the parties because it is a relatively speedy process, inexpensive in comparison to full-blown court litigation, and its arbitrators are knowledgeable about industry practices. However in IFTA arbitration, punitive damages are not allowed. Therefore if one party defrauds another, the only claim, effectively, can be for contract damages.

Contracts frequently require disputes to be heard in a confidential, binding arbitration before one provider—Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Service (JAMS)— which has offices in the United States and London, thus preventing the establishment of precedent or publication of unfavorable information. The major movie studios currently are all requiring JAMS arbitration clauses and refusing to negotiate on this. Many attorneys for claimants have surmised that this creates at least a perception of repeat player/provider bias.

Add to the foregoing the cost of arbitration, which can be enormous. Few qualified contingency fee attorneys will take such cases, and studios habitually do not provide attorneys’ fees clauses in their agreements. This assumes such an attorney is legally allowed to work on this basis. Many lawyers outside the United States may not be able to.
Additionally, discovery is usually limited in arbitrations, sometimes with only one deposition per side permitted. This disfavors claimants, who may need to depose several witnesses from the other side to create a clear picture of events.

For these reasons, having a case in a court of law may prove to be the best scenario if there is a dispute. Public trials provide unwanted “sunshine” on nefarious business practices and can intimidate wrongdoers and warn others by such exposure. They might even be less expensive. Further, if the trial court or jury “gets it wrong” there is always the possibility of a winning appeal, which is foreclosed in a binding arbitration. If the other side insists on arbitration, document their refusal to negotiate on this issue, as some courts of law may find this to be "unconscionable" and thus allow a court trial instead.

If it is not going to be an IFTA arbitration or in a court of law, and arbitration will be the forum, we recommend a provision that provides that the arbitrator will be selected by the parties and if they cannot agree, they shall each designate a third person who shall select the arbitrator.

Finally, remember that to be enforceable, the agreement must state that the arbitration is binding, final and can be enforced by any court of competent jurisdiction.

DON’T FORGET FOREIGN LEVY MONIES AND MUSIC PUBLISHING. My firm brought class action suits against the WGA, DGA and SAG for their failure to pay foreign levies that had been collected and not paid out. These are monies paid pursuant to the national laws in countries such as France, Germany, Brazil and many others. Ensure that these monies will be collected. (From our suits, over $200 million has since been paid out.) A producer will want to seek to exclude these monies from any distribution deal, but it’s a point of negotiation.

Likewise, the producer will want to own the music publishing rights to the soundtrack. The "performance rights"—monies paid for television usage and from movie theatres—can be substantial. The wise producer will have an “administration agreement” with a music publisher to collect these monies throughout the world, as they will not be collected by any foreign distributor.

CONSIDER A COLLECTION AGENT. Many deals involve a neutral third party, a collection agent that will collect and disburse the funds in accordance with any deal. Consider utilizing the same to ensure proper accounting and payments.

ALLOW FOR AUDITING. In any contingent compensation or distribution agreement, there must be an accounting and audit provision. Ensure the right to audit or suffer the consequences, namely, the inability to know if there has been an underpayment. Get regular accountings and the right to see all relevant documents relating to any income and costs. Producers will want the right to audit directly any licensee. Additionally, producers will want to see all relevant books of any sales agent relating to any transaction, as they may be relevant to monies due. This would include the general ledger of the producer. If an error discovered in any audit is more than, say, 10% of the amount paid, consider negotiating that the other party be responsible for the cost of the audit.

CAN ATTORNEYS’ FEES AND COSTS OF LITIGATION BE OBTAINED? The general rule of the United States is that the prevailing party in litigation is not entitled to attorneys’ fees and costs unless a requirement states as much in the contract. The rule in Europe is that attorneys’ fees and costs are awarded to the prevailing party. Attorneys’ fees can sometimes dwarf the amount at stake. Some lawyers work on a contingency or partial contingency basis; they may be willing to do so when attorneys’ fees are available, warranted, and collectable. For this reason, we generally suggest that an attorneys’ fees provision awarding them to the prevailing party be made in part of the contract.

There is no substitute in deal-making for conscientiousness and awareness of the legal terrain. If the deal goes sour, as so many sadly do, you’ll be glad you looked out for your interests.

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Original digital short-form series have become far more prolific over the last few years. And we’re not talking about YouTube videos of kids talking to camera from their bedrooms, or mash-ups of others’ original programming. We’re talking about real, TV-level, premium content. Real shows. Real stories. Professionally produced. There’s just one difference: length.

The proliferation of mobile devices and the consumption of video on everything from tablets to phones to PCs has increased the demand for short-form, snackable programming—anything from 19 minutes down to 30 seconds. And everyone is producing short form, from Doritos and Lexus to music artists and politicians. As a result of this saturation, consumers are now starting to demand more curated, premium programming. It all comes down to the viewer’s time, or lack thereof. With so many things competing for their attention, they have grown more discerning and impatient with low quality. The true way to gain their loyalty is by making content that is simply worth their time, be it 30 seconds or 19 minutes.

Producers in this space have seen what was once the “wild west,” with no rules and few expectations, evolve into a professional community where production looks a lot more traditional, budgets are rising and talent is just as important to a show as it is in network TV or movies.

Chris Hanada of Retrofit Films acknowledges that, “digital budgets have steadily and slowly risen over the years, while at the same time filming technology has become less expensive. Visually, audiences expect that a digital production look just as good as an on-air show. From a business perspective, the standards to which we are held by studios, networks, legal, financers and guilds are just as complex as a television show at this point. The continuing convergence of digital with traditional [production] has given us the opportunity to go from being a couple of guys in a garage to producing network content relatively quickly. Since the launch of our show *This Isn’t Working* (ABC’s digital series created by and starring Lisa Schwartz), the meetings we’re taking now are not just for digital originals, but for television projects as well.”

Hanada’s business partner, Tanner Kling, concurs and notes that the evolution has shifted their business. “When we started Retrofit Films back in 2005, our niche was exclusively digital short-form productions, so it’s really what launched our business. Back then we were producing almost exclusively derivative series [spin-offs and side stories of broadcast TV shows, feature films, etc.] but we always knew the platform would evolve. Moving into original digital series has, of course, been more creatively rewarding and has turned out to have been a great step toward the next opportunities.”

Retrofit isn’t alone. Many producers who have been in the trenches defining transmedia content and short-form for the past several years are now growing into the grand sythesizers in this field. They are bridging the smaller-scale
world of digital with the high-end production value of scripted TV.

David Tochterman and Bernie Su of Canvas Media Studio have not only been affected by the changes, they are making it their core business model. Tochterman notes, "It’s our primary focus. We launched Canvas with the intention of creating short-form scripted series that are designed for digital platforms as a first window." Their determined focus on innovation is now merging with traditional production approaches and what is coming out the other side is a variety of short formats that all focus on high-quality storytelling. But all of these producers can agree on one thing: the art of producing remains the same as it has ever been, perhaps with the main difference being the number of hats the producer typically has to wear on smaller scale projects.

Regarding their approach, Hanada explains, "Production is production. It’s funny to have meetings with networks or studios and explain what we did on a digital series. Then they ask us, ‘Can you handle a bigger budget?’ The truth is, we have had to wear multiple hats on these projects just to get things done – having a larger budget never intimidates us. A recent production of ours had a very high budget for digital, where it was almost comparable to an episode of television, and truthfully, it was a huge relief because we could build out a full staff to handle the nuts and bolts and we could focus on our most important job, the creative producing.”

And while creative producing remains
at the core of quality content, formats are changing radically, which adds another layer of complexity. Anything under 19 minutes seems to be the norm for mobile viewing. Tochterman explains, “Episodic length and individual platform specifications vary from project to project, which is both challenging and exciting. Every platform is designed differently, and as they refine their standards, Canvas needs to be flexible and versatile with our creative and business models.” By embracing the disruption, Tochterman and Su have become some of the top producers for premium digital short-form programming. From their scripted dramatic digital series, Vanity, to their upcoming Socio project, they are leaning into the opportunity that short form provides, focusing on creative issues, characters, and leveraging the format to their advantage by embracing short story arcs that are dramatically charged.

And that seems to be what younger, mobile-first audiences are seeking. In a Snapchat/Instagram world, millennials (and post-millennials) are finding their attention drawn to short, snappy, snackable content. But given all the competition in the digital space, premium scripted programming is starting to stand out as a beacon for distributors looking for a way to cut through the noise and establish a beachhead with new audiences. The Television Academy saw this trend and recently created five new short-form Emmy categories specifically for scripted comedic and dramatic programs, non-scripted programs, and best actor and actress in a scripted short-form series.

Canvas certainly is taking advantage of this trend. No strangers to Emmys, Su has won two on his own for earlier digital series and Vanity was nominated last year. This premium approach hasn’t just paid off with awards; eOne Television recently bought a stake in Canvas. Canvas intends to use this investment to distribute, produce and finance premium scripted content for digital and traditional media, as well as emerging VOD and OTT platforms, while eOne Television will have first dibs to help produce and distribute the fare worldwide across all media. And this premium content is taking a cue from the reigning motion picture model—franchises. David Tochterman explains, “Our focus is on creating entertainment franchises. Short-form is sometimes used purely for marketing, but that’s not our primary business. We look at shorter form series as a way to build IP value by connecting with younger, engaged audiences on digital-first platforms.”

But with all of this talk of a premium approach, keeping costs in check and managing digital productions require different thinking from traditional TV. Instead, short form tacks closer to an indie film production model, with small crews wearing multiple hats, living or dying on creative solutions to everything from production design to craft service. Retrofit’s Hanada believes that, in fact, the scale of production for digital is the essential distinction. Big crews just aren’t feasible. As quality increases, budgets will grow, but money is still very selectively targeted at key areas to increase production value. Tanner Kling explains, “Other than different guild and union rules, rates, etc., producing for this medium is just as challenging as traditional. We still need to dot each “i” and cross each “t.” That digital production is different or easier in some way has been one of the biggest misconceptions we’ve encountered since we started. The platform should not dictate the budget. The creative and the execution should. Often in digital, we end up backing the creative into a flat budget we’ve been given and it pains us creatively to have to cut the things that would make a show really pop. That said—I’ve yet to meet a producer that ever felt like they really had enough,” he laughs. “It’s our jobs to figure out how to maximize resources.”

Which brings us to how a short-form producer brings it all together. The producing team needs cohesion, vision and producing leadership to execute properly. Hanada notes, “The one thing that is different is that the digital projects often are more interesting creatively. You can be a bit more experimental with form and style in digital. Our
cast and crew are often top-notch people and we usually can’t afford their usual rates, but they’re excited to be working on something new and fresh. It’s much easier to bring great crew on board when everyone is excited about the material. It also makes negotiating deals easier when I can tell anyone, be it in front of or behind the camera, ‘This is what I have, and it’s what everyone else is getting, so I can’t give any more. But it’ll be a good time with a good crew and we’ll make something special.’ I think everyone from the top on down sees the opportunities, and it’s a better experience and a better product when your cast and crew believe in what they’re doing and aren’t just punching the clock.”

At the end of the day, these new digital producers are excited by the new challenges and using them to their advantage in a shifting marketplace. The combination of high quality and smaller scale seems to be paying off for not just producers, but for audiences too. Making premium programming at flexible price points is the name of the game. With increasing distribution of short premium programming across mobile and OTT platforms, the investment from traditional companies into the space, and acknowledgment of the format by major industry organizations like the Television Academy, you can expect short-form to stick around for a long time.

“They asked us, ‘Can you handle a bigger budget?’ The truth is, we have had to wear multiple hats on these projects just to get things done – having a larger budget never intimidates us.”
WHEN I SEE P.G.A. AFTER A PRODUCER’S NAME IN A MOVIE’S CREDITS, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
It means that according to the rules of the Producers Guild’s certification process, that producer performed a major portion of the producing functions on that particular motion picture.

DOES THE P.G.A. AFTER THE PRODUCER’S NAME MEAN THAT THE PRODUCER IS A MEMBER OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD?
No. A producer does not need to be a member of the PGA to receive the “p.g.a.” designation after their name. In many cases, the sets of initials you see in movie credits (such as A.S.C. and A.C.E.) indicate membership in an organization. The Producers Mark is different. It’s a certification mark; its purpose is to designate that the producer has met an officially recognized standard of performance on that film.

IF A PRODUCER DOESN’T RECEIVE THE P.G.A. MARK FROM THE PRODUCERS GUILD, WHAT HAPPENS TO THEIR PRODUCING CREDIT?
Nothing. The Producers Mark doesn’t control or affect the “Produced by” credit in any way, nor does it invalidate that credit by its absence.

WHAT’S THE PROCESS?
The process is initiated by the copyright owner of the film. After the post-production process has commenced, but 4-6 weeks before credits are locked, the owner submits a film for consideration via ProducersGuildAwards.com.

Within 2-3 weeks, the PGA sends out eligibility forms to every producer credited as “Produced By” or “Producer” on the film and sends confidential verification forms to a wide variety of third parties associated with the production of the film: the director(s), writer(s), department heads, company executives and key crew members.

Once forms have been returned, the PGA convenes a panel of arbiters, each of them active and experienced producers with numerous (and recent) credits, typically in the genre or category of the film under consideration. (i.e., If the film is a major studio tentpole, we try to utilize arbiters with considerable experience in making those big-budget studio pictures. If the film is a smaller indie movie, we rely on producers familiar with that type of production, etc.) An initial arbitration panel typically has three arbiters, though in rare circumstances two are used.

The arbiters review all materials returned to the PGA by the producers and third parties, with all personal names and company names redacted, so that arbiters can arrive at a judgment based on the testimony provided rather than the name recognition and perceived reputation of the producers.

Following the determination, the PGA staff informs the producers of the decision.

Producers who object to the decision have five days to notify the Guild of an intent to appeal. After giving producers the opportunity to add to or clarify their testimony, the PGA will convene a new panel of arbiters. All appellate panels consist of three producers. If the initial decision was unanimous, the appellate panel will consist of one producer from the original panel and two new producers; if the initial decision was not unanimous, the appellate panel will consist of three new producers. The decision of the appellate panel is final.

SO WHEN ARBITERS ARE LOOKING AT THESE FORMS, WHAT ARE THEY SEEING?
The eligibility form filled out by producers asks them to indicate their level of responsibility for a variety of producing functions spanning development, pre-production, physical production and post-production. The form also includes a free-response section for the producer to more fully elaborate on the specifics of the production and their role on the film. The verification forms filled out by third parties typically ask the respondent questions related to the nature of their collaboration with the credited producers.
WHO SELECTS WHICH ARBITERS VET THE CREDITS OF WHICH MOTION PICTURES?
That determination is made by the PGA’s Director of Legal Affairs and Arbitrations in consultation with the National Executive Director.

WHAT IF THE PGA SELECTIONS AN ARBITER WHO (UNBEKNOWNST TO THEM) IS BIASED AGAINST A GIVEN PRODUCER OR FILM?
The Guild takes proactive measures to prevent that from happening. Prior to convening the panel, the PGA provides all producers with a list of potential arbiters. Producers are free to strike any arbiter for any reason. Such arbiters will not be empaneled for that particular film. Furthermore, all arbiters are asked to affirmatively state that they have no interests in the films to be arbitrated that might result in a biased judgment. Even if all of those hurdles are cleared, an arbiter will be removed from the process if they or the PGA administrator feels that bias is affecting their judgment.

WHY CAN’T THE PGA BE MORE TRANSPARENT ABOUT THE PROCESS?
We maintain the strictest confidentiality around the identities of the producers, third parties and arbiters involved because such confidence is the only way we can hope to get accurate and truthful information. Many producers are powerful figures in this industry and this might put pressure on third parties and arbiters to achieve a desired decision. Keeping those identities confidential is the only way to maintain the integrity of the process.

ONCE A PRODUCER’S CREDIT IS CERTIFIED WITH THE P.G.A. MARK, IS THAT CERTIFICATION APPLIED PERMANENTLY TO ALL OF THE PRODUCER’S FILMS?
No. A Producers Mark appended to a producing credit applies to that film only. It represents the nature of the work performed on that film alone and does not “carry over” to future productions.

WHO DOES THE PRODUCERS GUILD REPRESENT?
The PGA is composed of over 7,500 professionals working in motion pictures, television and digital media throughout the United States and around the world.

HOW IS THE PGA DIFFERENT FROM ITS FELLOW GUILDS?
Unlike the DGA, WGA and SAG-AFTRA, the PGA is not a labor union. This means that we can’t go on strike, set wage minimums, or negotiate collective bargaining agreements on behalf of our membership. As we are now the largest professional trade organization in the entertainment industry, the PGA provides numerous benefits for its members, including educational and training events, employment opportunities, social and networking functions, and a collective voice that represents and protects the varied interests of producers and their teams, including the Producers Mark.
MEMBER BENEFITS

- Discounted registration for Produced By Conference and Produced By: New York.
- Vote on Producers Guild Awards and receive discount tickets to the event, as well as DVD screeners for awards consideration.
- Admission to special PGA pre-release screenings and Q&A events.
- Full access to PGA website including events, calendar, social networking tools, members-only video library.
- Access to PGA Job Board, online resume search, employment tools and job forums.
- Participation in the Motion Picture Industry Health, Welfare & Pension Plan.
- Eligibility for PGA Mentoring Program.
- Listing of contact and credit information in searchable online roster.
- Arbitration of credit disputes.
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- Free attendance at PGA seminars.
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- Complimentary subscription to Produced By.
NEW MEMBERS

The Producers Guild is proud to welcome the following new members, who joined the Guild in January and February, 2017.

**PRODUCERS COUNCIL**
Despina Alexiou
Roderick Alleyne
Jon Bardin
Nicolaas Bertelsen
Hezi Bezalel
Laura Boersma
Stacy Boles
Matthew Chavez¹
Ronald Chong
Margaret Comeaux
Essie Conway
Phil Cooke
David Cormican
James Costello
Ron Davis
Ged Doherty
Colin Firth²
Brian Flanagan
Alec Ginzburg
Ryan Harrington
David Hinojosa
Phil James
Brown Johnson
Amy Kaufman
Shannon Lamarche
Peter Lawson
Katherine Leary
Erica Lee
Karyn Leibovich
Chris Licht
Arthur Linson
John Linson
David Mandel
Chris McShane
Charles Miller
Brian Miller
Christopher Mills
Nate Moore
Fred Nelson
Kevin (Nan) Niu
Sev Ohanian
Jesse Ozeri
Warren Pick
Thierry Potok
Frank Rich
Gingi Rochelle
Ann Rose
Nancy Schafer
Michael Seitzman
Michael Simkin
R. Stratton
Nicole Teague
Julius Tennon
Mimi Valdes³
Ellyn Vander Wyden
Pascal Verschooris
Anthony Vorhies
Derek Westervelt
Brad Winderbaum
N. Woodlief

**NEW MEDIA COUNCIL**
Nickolas James
Christine Sanders
Nick Weir⁴

**AP COUNCIL**
**ASSOCIATE PRODUCER/PRODUCTION MANAGER/PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR**
Paige Boudreaux
Simon Brown
Dia Dufault
Caitlin Grossjung
Berry Hatfield
David Kaufmann
Donny Liang
Kristin Mann
L. Moore French
James Paul⁶
Matthew Principe

**SEGMENT/FIELD/STORY PRODUCER**
Michael Churton
Leyla Fayyaz⁶
Brooklyn Gross
Colleen McHugh

**PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**
Hannah Depew
Jordan Gilbert
Jessica Snavely
Jonathan Trimby
Kenya Sumner⁷

**POST PRODUCTION**
Paulette Lifton
Robert Rice
Nakia Shuman
Joshua Weisbeg

**VISUAL EFFECTS**
Raoul Bolognini
Edward Bonin
Lisa Marra⁸
Dawn Turner

¹²³⁴⁵⁶⁷⁸
The Producers Guild proudly salutes the following whose credits have been certified with the Producers Mark. This list includes films released in February and March 2017.

Certification via the Producers Mark indicates that a producer undertook a major portion of the producing duties on the motion picture.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
David Hoberman, p.g.a.
& Todd Lieberman, p.g.a.

THE BOSS BABY
Ramsey Naito, p.g.a.

CHIPS
Andrew Panay, p.g.a.
Ravi Mehta, p.g.a.

A CURE FOR WELLNESS
Arnon Milchan, p.g.a.
Gore Verbinski, p.g.a.
David Crockett, p.g.a.

FIFTY SHADES DARKER
Michael De Luca, p.g.a.
E L. James, p.g.a.
Dana Brunetti, p.g.a.
Markus Viscidi, p.g.a.

FIST FIGHT
Shawn Levy, p.g.a.
John Rickard, p.g.a.
Dan Cohen, p.g.a.

GET OUT
Sean McKittrick, p.g.a.
& Edward H. Hamm, Jr., p.g.a.
Jason Blum, p.g.a.
Jordan Peele, p.g.a.

GHOST IN THE SHELL
Avi Arad, p.g.a. & Ari Arad, p.g.a.

THE GREAT WALL
Thomas Tull, p.g.a. &
Jon Jashni, p.g.a.
Charles Roven, p.g.a.
Peter Loehr, p.g.a.

JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2
Basil Iwanyk, p.g.a.
Erica Lee, p.g.a.

KONG: SKULL ISLAND
Thomas Tull, p.g.a.
Mary Parent, p.g.a.
Jon Jashni, p.g.a.
Alex Garcia, p.g.a.

THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE
Dan Lin, p.g.a.
Phil Lord, p.g.a.
& Christopher Miller, p.g.a.

LIFE
David Ellison, p.g.a.
Dana Goldberg, p.g.a.
Bonnie Curtis, p.g.a.
& Julie Lynn, p.g.a.

LOGAN
Simon Kinberg, p.g.a.
Hutch Parker, p.g.a.

POWER RANGERS
Haim Saban, p.g.a.
Brian Casentini, p.g.a.
Wyck Godfrey, p.g.a.
& Marty Bowen, p.g.a.

THE SHACK
Gill Netter, p.g.a.

THE SPACE BETWEEN US
Richard Barton Lewis, p.g.a.

TABLE 19
Shawn Levy, p.g.a.
Dan Cohen, p.g.a.
P. Jennifer Dana, p.g.a.

WILSON
Mary Jane Skalski, p.g.a.
Jared Goldman, p.g.a.

THE ZOOKEEPER’S WIFE
Jeff Abberley, p.g.a.
Jamie Patricof, p.g.a.
Diane Miller Levin, p.g.a.
Kim Zubick, p.g.a.

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When it comes to production, there are few experiences that match the excitement and intensity of pulling off an epic stunt. A big stunt is almost a microcosm of production itself—the product of weeks of preparation, boiled down to a single, all-or-nothing chance at execution, with little to no room for error.

So it’s no surprise that when it came time to shoot this sequence for the 2007 action thriller *The Kingdom*, produced by Scott Stuber and Michael Mann and directed by Peter Berg, “Everyone had a high level of adrenaline and anticipation, because we had planned this stunt for months.” PGA member Steve Saeta took the photo above, while serving as executive producer and production manager on the film. “The stunt sequence was filmed over multiple weekends,” Steve tells us. “The particular moment you see was the most complex stunt/action piece of the sequence. One aspect of the stunt involved an SUV doing a cannon roll. The vehicle was so heavy it couldn’t roll, so stunts and effects came up with the idea of wrapping cable multiple times around the SUV then running those lines to two water trucks for traction and torque—you can see the cables attached to the rolling SUV.”

Despite (or maybe because of) the difficulty, the feeling on set was enthusiastic. “We were confident the stunt would work,” Steve continues, “but we had to ensure each department was in sync to create seamless action coordinated with multiple cameras, including one on a moving camera car. We had been shooting for a few weeks already, so we were a well-oiled machine.” One key to keeping the crew sharp? The efficiency of Peter Berg. “Pete is a director who knows what he wants and knows how to get it,” Steve reports. “He doesn’t believe in long days; most were under 10 hours. That helped keep everyone in great spirits.”

So what happened in the moments after this spectacular shot was snapped? “First thing was the safety check: Is everyone all right? (They were!) Next it was applause, high fives and hugs.” We know the feeling: when we secured this shot for our back page, we high-fived everyone in the PGA office. Thank you Steve, for snapping that pic at the best possible moment, and for sharing it with *Produced By*.

*We know what you’re thinking. “Best of all time? No way. I’ve got an on-set photo way better than that.” If that’s the case, we dare you to prove it. Submit it to BOSPOAT@producersguild.org. Before you submit, please review the contest rules at producersguild.org/bospoat. Because no matter how great your photo is, we have no desire to get sued over it.*
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