Bringing 5.1 to *Chinese Idol*

Hitchcock’s Foray Into Sound Design

Mixing and Your Focus Zone

FALL 2013
“Every fall, scrape and curse registers with tremendous impact. Thanks in particular to excellent sound work and fearsome stunt coordination.”

Justin Chang, VARIETY
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Cover: Ed Greene, CAS and the audio crew from Chinese Idol
Welcome to the fall edition! It’s awards season yet again. This is our 50th year in existence, and we are also celebrating the 20th year of our CAS Awards. I am very honored to be presiding over our prestigious organization. With your Board of Directors’ guidance, we have been able to grow and to continue the legacy handed to us from our predecessors in the CAS. I am very excited to report to you that your CAS Board of Directors has been extremely busy this year. I have asked all of our directors to participate on the various committees we have set up to offer our membership many new and exciting activities from which to choose. The goal is to use our brain-trust, our varied experience and knowledge, and to pool our resources to come up with ideas to help the CAS grow and to service our membership. We have several committees actively working now to help us achieve our goal of expanding the reach of the CAS. Some of those committees include Membership, Seminars, Awards Revisions, Awards Category Revisions, Family Activities, Website Revisions, and an International Branch Research Committee. We have such an active Board; it makes me very happy to bring news to the entire membership.

We have held a few seminars recently, which were very well attended. You can check them out inside these pages, as well as our website. One of the main missions of the CAS is to bring new technology and information to the membership, and we have more plans for similar tours and lectures coming this next year. We held our “Annual Production Parade of Sound Carts Seminar,” which drew big crowds. We held member tours at the new Technicolor facilities, as well as the soundstages of American Idol thanks to Scott Millan, CAS and Ed Greene, CAS! We also held a demonstration hosted at Dolby for their new ATMOS mixing system. Plus our annual family picnic was another huge success. In the future, look for us to be coordinating events with other guilds such as the ACE, MPSE, and some of our European sister organizations. I was recently able to open some doors in England, and we have a committee working to increase our presence in Europe and emerging facilities in China. Also, several of our members offer lecture demonstrations to colleges, high schools and lower schools on many sound-related subjects. The next generation of sound artists benefit greatly from the sharing we do. When I was handed the gavel three years ago, I said that ‘giving back to the community’ was a priority. I see that happening now, and it is very inspiring to young people.

Our social media presence has grown as well. Our website is looking good and expanding its functionality. It is designed to be the ‘hub’ of our organization, and it is taking shape nicely. We have a Facebook page (like us!), a Twitter page, as well as a new YouTube channel being prepared for launch soon. I hope also, that you are enjoying our expanding screening schedule, which you can refer to on the website as well. Your membership has value! Stay tuned for this year’s CAS Election coverage as well. Again, many thanks go to our hard-working Web Committee and Phil Palmer, CAS.

Regarding the awards season, I want to remind you about the changes now in place which have been forming these past two years as part of the platform of advancements for the CAS. Along with scoring mixers, we have now added ADR and Foley mixers as team members for some of our six awards categories. Recognizing sound artists is a priority for us, and we now have the ability to expand our roster of nominees. Make sure you go to the website and check out the rules of entry, submission forms, and the timelines which contain all the information you will need. Our Production and Post Production Technical Achievement Awards will once again be a highlight for us, and information will be posted soon. Also, we have reworked our awards categories to now include Feature Film Animation, alongside Live Action. Plus our TV categories have been expanded to include one hour and half-hour program categories.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the 50th Annual CAS Awards on February 22, 2014. Once again, we will be holding our high-profile event at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Downtown Los Angeles. This year, we are honoring re-recording mixer Andy Nelson with our Career Achievement Award. We are planning another fun evening, including a tribute to Ray Dolby and honoring our past presidents of the Cinema Audio Society. I look forward to seeing you all there!

David E. Fluhr, CAS President of the Cinema Audio Society

CAS FALL 2013
NEW MEMBERS
Active
Brendan Beebe, CAS
John Chalfant, CAS
Jesse Dodd, CAS
Devin Golub, CAS
Michael Miller, CAS
Carlos Sanches, CAS
Jacob Farron Smith, CAS
Tyler B. Stephens, CAS
Associate
Red Bradley
Dane Cody
Brian Kaurich
Michal Marks
Student
Adolfo Aguirre
Vincent Wong

CINEMA AUDIO SOCIETY
MISSION STATEMENT
To educate and inform the general public and the motion picture and television industry that effective sound is achieved by a creative, artistic and technical blending of diverse sound elements. To provide the motion picture and television industry with a progressive society of master craftsmen specialized in the art of creative cinematic sound recording. To advance the specialized field of cinematic sound recording by exchange of ideas, methods, and information. To advance the art of auditory appreciation, and to philanthropically support those causes dedicated to the sense of hearing. To institute and maintain high standards of conduct and craftsmanship among our members. To aid the motion picture and television industry in the selection and training of qualified personnel in the unique field of cinematic sound recording. To achieve for our members deserved recognition as major contributors to the field of motion picture and television entertainment.
“MAKE NO MISTAKE: ‘LLEWYN DAVIS’ IS FIRST AND FOREMOST A CLASSIC COEN CREATION AND THE WAY TO REALLY GET INSIDE IT IS TO LISTEN. BEHOLD THE HAUNTING NEW TUNE OF TROUBADOURS JOEL AND ETHAN COEN.”

*TIME| Lisa Schwarzbaum*

“VISUALLY AND SONICALLY, THIS IS AMONG THE COENS’ RICHEST AND MOST ORNATE FILMS.”

*HITFIX| Guy Lodge*


*FILM COMMENT| Kent Jones*

INSIDE LLEWYN DAVIS

1961

WHEN DOWNTOWN NEW YORK WAS AMERICA’S CAMPFIRE
Hello CAS members! As you finish raking that last batch of leaves, we bring you the fall Quarterly. In this issue, read about this year’s Career Achievement Award recipient, re-recording mixer Andy Nelson. Past Career Achievement Award recipient, Ed Greene, CAS talks about consulting for the surround mixes of American Idol’s Chinese counterpart, Chinese Idol. April Tucker, CAS digs up some research on how best to keep in your “zone” while working. Co-editor Peter Damski, CAS discusses the use of sound in one of the earliest talkies, Alfred Hitchcock’s Blackmail. This issue’s “Meet the Mixer” column has Devendra Cleary, CAS interviewing production mixer Phillip W. Palmer, CAS. “Technically Speaking” column writer G. John Garrett, CAS pulls double duty by sharing some of his experiences using iZotope’s RX3 while also giving us a rundown of some technologies he found of interest at this year’s AES Convention in NYC.

Karol Urban, CAS recaps this year’s CAS Family Picnic and, as always, you can read about the happenings of your fellow members in the “Been There Done That” and “The Lighter Side” sections.

The CAS Quarterly is produced as a service to our members on a voluntary basis. We greatly appreciate, and want, your feedback and suggestions—so send them in! Email us at CASQuarterly@CinemaAudioSociety.Org. Remember, our sponsors are professionals like you who understand the business and the needs of our industry. We encourage your commitment to them.

FROM THE EDITORS...

Peter Damski, CAS

Matt Foglia, CAS

2014 50TH ANNUAL CAS AWARDS TIMELINE

Nomination Ballot Voting begins online Wed., Dec. 11, 2013

Nomination Ballot Voting ends online 5 p.m., Mon., Jan. 6, 2014

Final Five Nominees announced Tue., Jan. 14, 2014

Final Voting begins online Wed., Jan. 29, 2014

Final Voting ends online 5 p.m., Fri., Feb. 14, 2014

50th Annual CAS Awards Sat., Feb. 22, 2014, in the Crystal Ballroom of the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles
“A taut, finely crafted maritime thriller, and a fabulous film. ‘Captain Phillips’ is a study in movement and action that is purely cinematic. The filmmakers allow the tension to ratchet up organically, rather than by way of self-conscious editing or manipulative music cues. ‘Captain Phillips’ is such an impressive dramatic achievement that it comes as a shock when it gets even better, during a devastating final scene in which the film single-handedly dismantles Hollywood notions of macho heroism in one shattering, virtually wordless sequence. That moment, as purely emotional as what went before has been kinetic, makes ‘Captain Phillips’ a masterpiece.”

—The Washington Post Ann Hornaday

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

BEST PICTURE

BEST SOUND MIXING Chris Burdon
Mark Taylor
Mike Prestwood Smith
Chris Munro

BEST SOUND EDITING Oliver Tarney

CAPTAIN PHILLIPS

SonyPictures.com/Awards
METALLICA THROUGH THE NEVER

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING MOTION PICTURE - LIVE ACTION

RICK KLINE
JEFFREY J. HABOUSH
GREG FIDELMAN
DAVID HUSBY
CHRIS NAVARRO
DON WHITE

Foley Mixer
Taking
iZotope’s RX3 Advanced
for a Quick Test Drive

by G. John Garrett, CAS

I recently got the chance to take iZotope RX3 Advanced for a test drive, and I was very impressed with what it does. RX3 and RX3 Advanced are made to repair and restore recordings that have … problems.

Most of the features (which you can check out on their site), are the types of things posties don’t want field mixers knowing about. And the stuff that field mixers don’t want producers knowing about. It’s always better to make a clean, fat recording than to fix it in post. Plus, I hear that climate-controlled post time costs actual money, so we should always strive for the best. Sometimes, however, we don’t always get the best.

As it turns out, I had some work for RX3 to do. I was mainly interested to see how well it could remove broadband HVAC noise from a violin performance I recorded this summer. The venue would not turn off the AC, and without some serious de-noising, the recording would never make it to its upcoming CD release. I processed the mics slightly differently from each other based on the signal-to-noise ratio of each mic, or stereo pair. Re-recording mixer Jay Rose, CAS pointed out that I could get away with more aggressive processing on the surround mics, since their contribution to the mix would be less than the main instrument mic, and the S/N at the surrounds was approaching 1. So that’s what I did. I used a Joly Engineering-modified Rode NT1a on the violin and a Holophone H2Pro for ambience in the form of the center channel, L/R pair and L/R surrounds. I have uploaded a pair of 192Kb/S mp3 files of the mixes to http://soundcart.com/magic.

One thing that I think must be very difficult to do is take RX3 (top left), RX3 Basic (bottom left) and scratch (above).
Best Animated Feature
Best Sound Mixing
Best Sound Editing

©2013 Disney/Pixar
reverb out of a recording. How do you de-convolve a room without knowing where all the reflections are coming from, and when they’re arriving? Still, the day I installed the RX3, a colleague brought me a recording made with a boom mic that, thanks to that old devil, wide-and-tight cameras, sounded very wide. It was also in a hard room. The hope was to find out if intelligibility could be improved, since some problem occurred with the subject’s wireless and the director would not let production stop to correct it. Once again, this was on day one of having the software. As a matter of fact, it was hour one. In about 10 minutes, we had gotten about half the reverb out of the signal, and I think multiple passes would have improved it even more, but we reached our goal of usable intelligibility and went on to more pressing matters in the malt beverage family.

Using the software reminded me of the first time I was ever at a music mastering session. The desired effect can best be achieved through critical listening and having the ability to tell when you’ve gone too far. When you’ve gone too far, you can introduce artifacts, and they are subtle. I’m not a stranger to restoration tools in general, but I am a rookie with the iZotope suite. Still, I was able to get really good results with just a few minutes’ work. I can only imagine the magic that can be wrought by a full-time post mixer!

An Interview with Phillip W. Palmer, CAS

by Devendra Cleary, CAS

I know you’ve spent some time in my home state of Colorado, and I’m sure you hit the slopes there. Now that you’re living on the West Coast, how do you feel the skiing here compares?

The West Coast has some of the best skiing in the country. We have Mammoth Mountain not too far away, and if I want, I can go to my old stomping ground of Squaw Valley and the Lake Tahoe region. In the mid-’90s, I took a couple of years and lived in the Vail, a Colorado area. It’s an amazing resort, as are many of the mountains in that region. The snow is a little different out here, but there’s still good skiing all over.

How do your hobbies and your work relate?

Something that I really enjoy is the constant evolution of audio equipment. At some point, it goes beyond work for me, it’s an interest in new technology and how it applies to our field. The new use of Audinate’s Dante network protocol is a great example. Audinate was intrigued when inquiries started flowing in from production sound mixers on how we could implement their technology into our workflow. I still consider myself a longtime student and spend a lot of time learning new things.

I know you have a passion for coffee. Can you talk about that?

Oh yes, coffee has become quite the passion for me. I’ve been a coffee drinker for a long time and drank the usual cup from Starbucks on a daily basis. Recently, I’ve discovered the incredible wealth of excellent coffee roasters on the West Coast. This past summer, my girlfriend Jennifer and I visited coffee roasters all over the West Coast from San Diego to Vancouver.

Can you tell me about some of your early mentors?

I have many people to thank for my education and guidance. I was given a lot of opportunities early in my career that are monumental to where I am today. Robert Wald gave me my first job when all I knew was live production sound. I had to fake it the whole time. He and the boom operator, Don Broughton, taught me so much. All the sound mixers from Dallas; Skip Frazee, Michael Haines, Stacy Brownrigg, Darryl Henke, Pete Verrando, gave me many opportunities as a boom operator. It was there that I was able to put my sound package together and move up to mixing full time. Just as I was making that leap from boom operator to mixer, I met Peter Devlin. Peter has been a friend and mentor for many years now and without his help, many of my mixing opportunities would never have happened.

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Dallas, TX. My dad worked in sales when I was young, so we moved around a bit. By the time I graduated from high school, I had lived in Dallas, Rolling Meadows, IL, Westport, CT, Winston-Salem, NC, and Lafayette, CA. I graduated high school from Olympic Valley School, now called Squaw Valley Academy.

Tell me about your college path.

I went to college at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, which was a complete change from the mountain snow. My initial college track was split between photography and radio/TV/film. I had a bit of a musical background, playing guitar since I was young, so I was drawn to audio and sound production. For some reason, it was the job no one really wanted when I was a student, so I found myself as the sound guy for a lot of projects. I dropped the photography minor after a tragic event when I was a junior, when all my negatives and prints burned in an apartment fire.

What drew you to production sound?

I didn’t go right into film and television work right after college. I was still very involved in music as I graduated. I had a successful band, and also began mixing live music in and around Dallas. There was quite a music scene in Texas in the early and mid-’80s.

What hobbies are you currently the most active in?

I enjoy several disciplines of martial arts as well as fitness and strength training. A good deal of my time every weekend is spent at the gym. I also really enjoy skiing, as it was so much a part of my life growing up.
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MARK S. ALLEN, GOOD DAY SACRAMENTO

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION IN ALL CATEGORIES INCLUDING

BEST ANIMATED FEATURE
PRODUCED BY Kristine Belson, p.g.a. • Jane Hartwell, p.g.a.

DIRECTED BY Chris Sanders & Kirk DeMicco

BEST SOUND MIXING
RE-RECORDING MIXERS
Randy Thom • Gary A. Rizzo

BEST SOUND EDITING
SOUND DESIGNER
Randy Thom
SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR
Jonathan Null

DreamWorks

THE CROODS

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What are some things that you carry with you today that you learned from any of these mentors?
There is just so much. Trusting your ears, knowledge of the equipment, ability to negotiate, having a plan, having a back-up plan, thinking of options, decisive answers, quick action and confidence. The list goes on.

What shows stick out in your memory as being pivotal in your career? I’d like to hear some memorable war stories from some of them.
I’ll start with that first job with Bob Wald and Don Broughton. My first day holding a boom, I hit the actor right on the head. I’d like to apologize to Michael O’Keefe. He was a sport.

Entourage This show was early in the evolution of multi-tracking for me. The new DEVA V came out a couple of months before we started the second season, and I was able to easily iso track the cast. Post was very interested in the possibility of multi-tracking all the actors on a daily basis, and I was able to accommodate. Entourage was a very mobile show, with many company moves in a day. I had to be much more agile than ever before and it required me to rethink how I had my gear assembled.

Jericho The producers of Jericho made our experience on that show a very special time. Jon Turteltaub, Karim Zreik, and Dan Shotz made what was a very difficult job into an unforgettable filming experience. Jericho was like working with a family, we worked and hung out together on set and off.

Star Trek Peter Devlin brought me in to do some second unit on the first of the J.J. Abrams reboot. It was as if I came in and then never left. The show kept getting bigger and bigger. I remember being on the site where we built the driller platform and the ice planet side by side on the upper parking lot of Dodger Stadium thinking, “Wow, I’m really working on Star Trek.” It was incredibly massive in scale.

Glee I was working on yet another second unit for Peter when I got the call from John Kousakis, a producer from Jericho, to do the pilot for Glee. We weren’t but a few days into the pilot when we all knew this was something special and might go for a while. We had no idea it would become such a part of pop culture. Glee is such a team operation and has required use of every bit of what I’ve learned in the business. I couldn’t do it without my crew. Here’s the rundown of the Glee team: Patrick Martens, boom operator. Seasons 1–5: Mitchell Gebhard, utility sound tech. Seasons 3–5: Jeff Zimmerman, music playback. Seasons 4–5: Devendra Cleary, utility sound & music playback.

What was going through your head the moment you realized you had won your Emmy for [“The Madonna” episode of] Glee?
RUN! They tell you right before the awards that you have something like 45 seconds from when they call your name to when they play you off stage. It was hilarious, I look back at the video and it looks like I won a race. When we got downstairs to actually get our Emmy (the one they hand you on stage is a prop), I began to realize what really just happened. I was in line downstairs behind John Lithgow who had just won for his role on Dexter. He turned to me and shouted, “Congratulations!” It was just amazing.

How has Glee influenced the style in which you now work?
I’m not sure it has influenced a style per se, but for how we shoot and how I know the show is edited, it has honed my choices and decisions as to how I approach situations. It has allowed me to look at situations more comprehensively than just from a sound mixer’s point of view. I think that only really happens when you are on a show for an extended length of time.

What do you think would be your career path if you didn’t do production sound?
I feel pretty confident it would be in live production sound and tour work. I’ve always enjoyed mixing live with all the complexity and challenges. When you’re live and the show starts, there’s no stopping till it’s over. It’s a great ride.

Talk about your involvement with the Cinema Audio Society.
I’ve done one 2-year term on the Board of Directors as an alternate. I’m currently the webmaster for the new CAS website. As a Board member, I put together the committee and team that rebooted the current website. When my term on the BOD ended, I was asked to remain on as webmaster. I still attend the meetings on a regular basis and look forward to my continued participation. We have some very interesting changes happening with our CAS website and I am very happy with its direction.
BEST ANIMATED FEATURE
BEST SOUND EDITING • BEST SOUND MIXING
FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

BEST SOUND EDITING
GLENN FREEMANTLE

BEST SOUND MIXING
Production Sound Mixer
CHRIS MUNRO
Re-Recording Mixers
SKIP LIEVSAY
NIV ADIRI
CHRISTOPHER BENSTEAD

GRAVITY

"THE SOUND DESIGN IS HYPNOTIC AND ESSENTIAL TO THE EXPERIENCE."
JOE MORGENSTERN - THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WWW.WARNERBROS2013.COM
This year’s AES Convention in New York seemed to be smaller than year’s past but, from all reports, it was well attended. Here are a few highlights.

SSL is peeking out of the windowless studio with their LIVE L500 live console. It reminds me a lot of what a 2013 version of the Sony DMX R-100 console might be, at least ergonomically. Based on their Tempest OCP engine, there’s a multi-touch screen from which you can control and display pretty much everything the faders don’t do. It has multi-layer fader banks and is SSL through and through. $84,000–$130,000, depending on options.

Slate Pro Audio introduced its Raven glass touch screen control surfaces for DAWs. This is the Raven MTX. The lower console has real controls, the slanted top is the touch screen. It’s big enough that you will have to rethink near-field monitoring. At the moment, they only support Apple computers, but they promise PC integration soon. Logic, Cuebase and Live DAWs support are coming, too. Expected MSRP is around $15,000, with the MTI going for around $3,500.

The API BOX is a smaller format analog project console with four mic/line/instrument input channels and a 16-channel summing mixer. Given the popularity, especially in music circles of mixing in the box but summing to stereo in analog, this may find a good amount of fans. Small. Expensive. API. $17,999 MSRP.

Tree Audio displayed an 8X2 discrete mixer with tube mic pres in each channel strip. About $22,000.

Avid showed its new S6 console, with the touch-screen center section. Along with modular construction, it will support any EUCON-enabled DAW. It looked cool for a control surface. The meter bridge can display the track waveform along with levels. The M10 version starts at $21,995 and M40 configurations start at $43,480.
Gotham has developed a DANTE matrix controller for multi-camera reality shows. It seems very flexible and powerful. Stay tuned for a more in-depth report in an upcoming Quarterly.

Yoshido Sonoda and Toshiuki Nakamiya’s laser microphone won the Best Peer-Reviewed Paper Award at AES. I don’t know the pickup pattern, but I’m guessing the Nyquist limit on this thing is around 223.9996 GHz. (The photo with the business card is to show the laser beam more clearly.)

Ghielmetti has a line of new patchbays that look interesting. Gold-plated steel pins go into self-cleaning titanium receivers in the bay, which includes full or half-normalling from the front panel, and a wide array of interconnecting options on the backside. The four pins are TRS with a phase pin, so you can’t put the patch in out-of-phase. They’re pricey (around $1,000 per 96-connection bay), but the interconnect flexibility on the backplane is worth it.

Tascam was showing their DA300 mastering recorder: $999 MSRP. You can chain four of them together, but there’s no timecode.

Triad-Orbit has a line of cool stand/clamp/accessory gizmos made mostly for the studio, but I can see cart and maybe even boom pole possibilities with their quick-release systems.

Schoeps had their V4U vocal microphone at the show. It can handle up to 144 dB SPL, has built-in RF filtering. Sounded like you might expect a Schoeps vocal mic to sound. Around $3,000.

Sanken had their CU55 small diaphragm studio condenser on display as well. $1,195.

On the effects processor side, Bricasti’s M7 is a nice sounding stereo reverb that fits in a 1RU space with a desktop controller. Street price $3,700.

These are just some of the items I thought were interesting enough to “write home” about. If you are in need of some new gear, you definitely have choices.
FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

AMERICAN HUSTLE

BEST PICTURE

BEST SOUND MIXING JOHN ROSS, MYRON NETTINGA, TOM WILLIAMS, CAS

BEST SOUND EDITING JOHN ROSS
EMMY Award Winners for 2013

Boardwalk Empire – “Margate Sands”

Nurse Jackie – “Teachable Moments”

The 55th Annual Grammy Awards

History of the Eagles

Behind the Candelabra
The CAS congratulates the following mixers for receiving a Primetime Emmy Award at this year’s gala, held September 15, 2013.

OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A COMEDY OR DRAMA SERIES (ONE HOUR)
*Boardwalk Empire* – “Margate Sands”
HBO
Frank Stettner CAS, Production Mixer
George A. Lara, Foley Mixer
Mark DeSimone, ADR Mixer
Tom Fleischman CAS, Re-recording Mixer

OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A COMEDY OR DRAMA SERIES (HALF-HOUR) AND ANIMATION
*Nurse Jackie* – “Teachable Moments”
Showtime
Jan McLaughlin CAS, Production Sound Mixer
Peter Waggoner, Re-recording Mixer

OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A MINISERIES OR A MOVIE
*Behind the Candelabra*
HBO
Dennis Towns, Production Mixer
Larry Blake, Re-recording Mixer
Thomas Vicari, Scoring Mixer

OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A VARIETY SERIES OR A SPECIAL
*The 55th Annual Grammy Awards*
CBS
Thomas Holmes, Production Mixer
Mikael Stewart, House Production Mixer
John Harris, Music Mixer
Eric Schilling, Music Mixer
Ron Reaves, House Music Mixer
Eric Johnston, Playback Mixer
Pablo Munguia, Playback Mixer
Thomas Pesa, Stage Mixer
Michael Parker, Stage Mixer
Bob La Masney, Audience Supplemental Mixer

OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR NONFICTION PROGRAMMING (SINGLE OR MULTI-CAMERA)
*History of the Eagles*
Showtime
Tom Fleischman CAS, Re-recording Mixer
Bret Johnson, Sound Re-recordingist
Richard Davis, Music Mixer
Elliot Scheiner, Music Mixer
Mike Harlow, Music Mixer

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FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

BEST SOUND MIXING

PRODUCTION SOUND MIXER
TONY JOHNSON

RE-RECORDING MIXERS
CHRISTOPHER BOYES
M ICHAEL HEDGES
MICHAEL SEMANICK

BEST SOUND EDITING

BRENT BURGE
CHRIS WARD

THE HOBBIT
THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ‘THE LORD OF THE RINGS’ TRILOGY
CAS President David E. Fluhr announced that the organization will honor re-recording mixer Andy Nelson with the Society’s highest accolade, the CAS, Career Achievement Award. It will be presented at the 50th CAS Awards on February 22, 2014, in the Crystal Ballroom of the historic Millennium-Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles.

“I am thrilled to announce Andy Nelson as this year’s Cinema Audio Society Career Achievement honoree. Andy is a longtime colleague, and I have had the pleasure of watching Andy skyrocket to the top of our craft over these last few years,” said Fluhr. “Andy’s easy-going demeanor, natural mixing and storytelling talents, along with his ability to guide large productions with ease and confidence, have led the CAS Board of Directors to bestow this honor. We are looking forward to an exciting evening on February 22, 2014, as the CAS celebrates our 50th year.”

Growing up in London and pursuing his love of film, Andy started work as a projectionist at the local cinema at the age of 16. He was already putting music to his 8mm films at home, a sure sign of things to come. Starting his apprenticeship at a local documentary film company, he was eventually accepted into the BBC Film Department and by the late ‘70s was in the mixing seat.

The next stop was an independent studio in Soho, London, where Andy handled many music projects, his other great passion, and was introduced to the world of features when working with the late Ken Russell. In 1983, he moved to Shepperdon Studios working again with Ken, Nic Roeg and Stanley Kubrick to name a few.

In 1987, Andy was offered the position of Director of Sound at Film House in Toronto and that year won a Genie Award and garnered his first Oscar nomination for Gorillas in the Mist. It wasn’t long before he was lucky enough to be offered a position with Todd A-O Studios. Working on Stage A, the legendary sound room in Hollywood, allowed him the opportunity to mix for Steven Spielberg, Brian de Palma, Adrian Lyne, Warren Beatty, Alan Parker and many, many more.

In 1999, Andy moved across town to Fox Studios where he has worked for 14 years, and also serves as Senior Vice President Sound Operations.

Nelson has previously received 18 nominations for the CAS Award for Outstanding Achievement in Sound Mixing for a Feature Film and won the award in 2013 for Les Misérables and in 1999 for Saving Private Ryan.

In addition to his CAS wins, Nelson has been nominated 18 times for the Oscar® with wins for Les Misérables and Saving Private Ryan and has been recognized by BAFTA with 14 nominations with wins for Les Misérables, Moulin Rouge!, Saving Private Ryan, L.A. Confidential and Braveheart.

In a career that spans 35 years, Nelson has been the re-recording mixer on more than 140 feature films, including Lincoln, Rise of the Guardians, War Horse, Super 8, Avatar, Star Trek, Blood Diamond, War of the Worlds, The Last Samurai, Stabiscuit, Catch Me if You Can, Shrek, The Insider, The Thin Red Line, The X-Files, Evita and Schindler’s List.

As the 32nd recipient of the Cinema Audio Society’s highest honor, Mr. Nelson joins an illustrious group of past honorees that includes Ray Dolby, CAS; Robert Altman, Jack Solomon, CAS; John Bonner, CAS; Bill Varney, CAS; Don Rogers, CAS; Walter Murch, CAS; Jim Webb, CAS; Richard Portman, CAS; Tomlinson Holman, CAS; Mike Minkler, CAS; Ed Greene, CAS; Dennis Sands, CAS; Dennis L. Maitland, Sr., CAS; Randy Thom, CAS; Jeffrey S. Wexler, CAS; Scott Millan, CAS and Chris Newman, CAS.

Re-Recording Mixer

Andy Nelson
to Be Honored with the
CAS Career Achievement Award

by Dorothea Sargent
FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

"THE MOVIE IS ALIVE WITH IMAGES, MUSIC AND SENSATIONS THAT EVOKE THE LONELINESS AND BEAUTIFUL PROMISE OF URBAN LIFE AND THE SENSE THAT THE NATURE OF RELATIONSHIPS IS RAPIDLY CHANGING."

STEPHEN REBELLO, PLAYBOY

her

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PRODUCTION SOUND MIXER
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Chinese Idol: A Work in Progress

by Ed Greene, CAS

A few days later, I received a call from Roy Lu, who arranged for the SMG visit, asking if I would be interested in traveling to Shanghai as an audio consultant to Chinese Idol. After some weeks of emails and planning, I arrived in Shanghai on Friday, July 12. My primary host was Forest Lin, Director of Technical Operations at SMG. My other hosts were Tony Mo Jiawei, an engineering supervisor and recording engineer, and Cherry Qian, an assistant to Forest Lin. After a gracious greeting on my arrival, they arranged for us to travel Saturday to their broadcast venue. If the exact purpose of my trip wasn’t clear before traveling to Shanghai, here’s what I learned:

1. Chinese Idol was already on air in SD and stereo, but SMG was interested in starting a new premium channel in HD and 5.1.
2. While SMG had done broadcasts in 5.1 for sports, they were interested in consultation for 5.1 entertainment shows.
3. My assignment was to help set up and supervise a 5.1 mix on Chinese Idol.

“The mixing a show in a language I didn’t understand was a surreal experience.”

It turned out the Chinese Idol broadcast venue was a 5,000-seat tennis stadium on the outskirts of Shanghai. The audience, a wedge of the seating area, held about 1,500. Our 5.1 control room was in an OB van with a Studer Vista 8 console, a full Pro Tools system, 5.1 metering with a scope, along with monitoring on JBL speakers. The audio Control Room (CR) for the SD/stereo show was in the stadium. The SMG OB van received two MADI feeds with all audio sources from the CR inside the venue. The video CR (another OB van) was next to us, both outside the stadium.

I’ve had the opportunity to mix many shows in 5.1 and stereo on Studer Vista 8’s and always found them reliable, ergonomically-friendly, with very good sound. In my opinion, those...
are the essential requirements, in order, for any live broadcast system. It turned out the *Chinese Idol* weekly live broadcast was Sunday evening, so Saturday was a serious rehearsal day. Looking at the breakdown and listening to the MADI feeds during rehearsal convinced me we could make a reasonable 5.1 mix. I explained that I would set up the basic parameters of a 5.1 mix in a manner comfortable to me, understanding that another mixer may choose to move faders around to better suit their style. The fortunate advantage of digital consoles is that processing, panning and EFX remain on inputs, even if they are moved to another position on the desk.

The 5.1 mix I chose to set up followed the same format I’ve used for American broadcasts. My objective in panning and mixing is to have the viewer listen as if they are in the 10th row center at the event. However, there are restrictions, mostly in receivers, that influence the choices of panning and mix.

1. The default stereo mixdown in receivers was designed for broadcast of surround motion pictures and does not lend itself to audio information common to front and back.
2. Most stereo receivers have a default “surround enhancement.” This dates back to stereo TV when most screens were 21 inches to 27 inches. The result provides a wider spread to the stereo image at the expense of less center information. In my opinion, this no longer belongs as a default setting because it distorts the intended balance of the mix.
3. There are still some broadcasters and smaller cable companies transmitting only in stereo. When transmission only provides a 5.1 source, some stations and cable providers make the operational error of using Left Front, Right Front for their stereo transmission.

So, with the above in mind, my panning for *Chinese Idol* was: Dialogue and Vocals, center with divergence LF, RF; Music, LF, RF with some LR, RR; Video Tape playbacks, same as music but with enough C to anchor the dialogue; Rear Audience, panned LR, RR; Front Audience, panned LF, RF. The panning indicating some common information to Front and Rear generally followed the old 3 to 1 rule. (If 9dB in front, 3dB in rear, etc.) Ultimately, this is all measured by listening to the result and checking balances between 5.1, Lo/Ro and Lt/Rt.

In addition to Tony and Cherry, there were always 4–6 SMG engineering people observing in our OB van. By Sunday afternoon, with help from several SMG engineers, the desk was configured for mixing a 5.1 version of *Chinese Idol*. During the dress rehearsal, I set gain, EQ, compression, effects and a preliminary 5.1 mix. As time for the live show got closer, I inquired which mixer wanted to do the mix. With no volunteers, I realized I was elected to mix their first 5.1 test show. Since the show format was different, observing the dress rehearsal was extremely helpful. To me, mixing a show in a language I didn’t understand was a surreal experience.

This was the first season of *Chinese Idol*, and like the early seasons of *American Idol*, it was still a work in progress. My mixing their first 5.1 test show turned out to be helpful because it gave me a big-picture look at the show and led me to provide some observations on various aspects of their production.

During the following week, we returned several times to the OB van and put up the 5.1 Pro Tools session, discussing the mix and making some adjustments. Several of the SMG mixers sat at the desk to get the feel of the 5.1 show.

Later that week, I visited inside the venue to listen and...
“THERE’S A PULSATING HYPER REALITY ABOUT THE FILM IN WHICH EVERYTHING IS ZINGING... ‘GATSBY’ DELIVERS A FEAST THAT IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO SATISFY AND ENTHRALL.”

– LOUISE KELLER, URBAN CINEFILE

“THE DIRECTOR UNDERSTANDS FITZGERALD’S BOOK AND BRINGS THE WRITER’S CLASSIC PROSE TO LIFE ON CINEMATIC TERMS THAT FEEL THRILLING, VISCERAL, AND IMMEDIATE.”

– CARA NASH, FILMINK
observe their setup. The set and stage, orchestra, PA and foldback areas were very well designed and operated. My only negative observation was that the PA was too loud. I measured levels in the area of 115 dB SPL C weighted in the audience area. Levels consistently over 110 dB SPL can easily damage young ears in particular—a large part of their audience. The audio equipment inside the venue was mostly recognizable brands. 

Because of the high SPL, hosts and talent all used handheld RF’s, no lav’s (mostly Shures). Table mikes for judges were DPAs. PA, foldback and broadcast consoles were mostly Digital Soundcraft. Ear monitors were mostly Sennheisers. The entire setup appeared superbly and cleanly engineered and operated.

I was told the following Monday, after the 5.1 test show, that there would be a playback for the head of Dragon TV, a satellite program distribution company now part of SMG, to decide if they would go ahead with the 5.1 project. Again, I ended up mixing the second 5.1 test show. The playback was set up at SMG headquarters in a Pro Tools mix room.

The head of Dragon TV sat at a Digidesign console listening to each of three sources from Sunday’s show; a section of the 5.1 mix, a stereo mixdown, and the stereo mix of the SD show as aired. The room that comfortably holds about six people had about 16. Afterward, there was a lengthy discussion, none of which I understood, with most people finally leaving the room. Some time later, I was told the head of Dragon TV and her group liked what they heard and approved continuation of the project.

The second part of my trip to Shanghai was a request for me to lecture to an SMG engineering group about mixing 5.1 entertainment television. Although I brought a separate audio drive and DVD picture elements with timecode, they were not easily displayed. Tony downloaded in Shanghai the entire American Idol live broadcast season in HD and 5.1. I answered some written questions in advance, had photographs of our setup at TV City and was able to play pieces from several shows of American Idol on a large HD screen with a proper 5.1 playback system in an SMG screening room.

On the Sunday before I left, Robin, a Chinese mixer from SMG, did a really good job mixing the last of the 5.1 test shows. As expected, he reconfigured the Vista 8 more to his mixing style, but leaving the basic 5.1 panning template. I cannot speak highly enough about the hospitality and professionalism of the Chinese team during my trip to Shanghai. I remain in contact with people from my trip and have received emails with audio files for review of several 5.1 broadcasts.

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“THE MOVIE’S VISCERALLY TERRIFYING, ENNOBLING LANGUAGE IS ALL SIGHT AND SOUND. We hear the creak of ropes and the gentle lapping of waves around his bunk. The whisper swells into a roar, accompanied by whistling wind as a storm bears down on his rudderless boat. Loudest of all is the deep silence that tells Our Man he’s all alone, his only compass an animal instinct to endure.”

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Mixing and Your Focus Zone

by April Tucker, CAS

Do you have days where you can’t seem to get started or get things done, and don’t know why? Do you feel wiped out only on days when there’s a client in the room? Do you “crash” after a busy mix? What’s the difference between having an off day or the day flying by without effort?

Lucy Jo Palladino, PhD, is a psychologist, attention expert and author of Find Your Focus Zone: An Effective New Plan to Defeat Distraction and Overload. She describes your focus zone as a “relaxed-alert” state where you are at optimal stimulation and attention. It’s a place where you are not bored or overwhelmed, but alert and working at your best. Athletes refer to this state as “peak performance,” and artists call it “flow.” Palladino offers simple strategies to become more aware of how focused you are, where you need to be, and how to train yourself to get there quickly (and stay there).

The Science of Stimulation

Researchers have been studying the concept of stimulation for over 100 years. In 1908, psychologists Robert M. Yerkes and John Dillingham Dodson developed the Yerkes-Dodson law, which dictates that performance increases with arousal (physiological or mental), but only to a point. When arousal becomes too high, performance decreases. In other words, we perform best when we are neither overstimulated (anxious, overwhelmed, hyperfocused) or understimulated (bored or uninterested).

Dr. Palladino uses a similar model: “The upside-down U is a helpful mental tool for getting and staying in your zone. Think of it as a gauge on the dashboard of your car. Psych yourself up or calm yourself down as needed to keep that needle in the range around the center.”

An example of this in use by Olympic athletes—who face both ends of the spectrum. Athletes practice long hours for years, which can be understimulating, yet they must find ways to keep focus during training. As an event gets closer, the problem reverses itself. “The contests, pageantry, and media blitz create a constant buzz of overstimulation. Only those who can stay calm enough to concentrate have a chance at winning a medal ... The winners are those who hone their psychological skills. They know how and when to rev up or calm down. They stay in their focus zone—the relaxed-alert state of just-right stimulation—where attention is best.” (Palladino, website)

Mixers also encounter both ends of this spectrum, between long production shoots or mixing alone unsupervised, and being on a dub stage during a high-pressure review. We will look at these scenarios more closely in a bit.
From Short to Long, Extreme Rejection to Wide Stereo, M-S to Point-and-Shoot Surround, Sanken has the right shotgun for you.

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Stimulation levels change through brain chemicals called neurotransmitters. There are over 60 different chemicals with serotonin, dopamine, and adrenaline being some of the more commonly known ones. Our thoughts, what we eat, and the drugs we take will all affect the chemicals in our brains. Chemicals are released throughout the day, and when they are depleted, we need to replenish. “If you’ve been focusing all day, you’re low on brain chemicals when you leave work. If you’ve been hyper-focusing all day (under stress), you’ll have even less in reserve. When brain chemicals are depleted, your brain is out of fuel. Think of a car running out of gas. You’re not going to move until you refuel. Luckily, with time and rest, unlike a car, the brain refuels itself,” Palladino says. Because we mostly replenish through sleep, “we have maximum potential for focusing in the morning. Peak time for alertness is morning, but peak time for reaction time is afternoon. We can regenerate, to some extent, through the day, especially by choosing breaks that replenish, not deplete, brain chemicals. Some people find that they benefit from power naps.”

“I carefully named my book Find Your Focus Zone, not Find the Focus Zone. This distinction matters. We have different faces, different fingerprints; of course, we have different neurochemistries, even if we can’t see them. Your threshold for metabolizing certain brain chemicals is going to be different than someone else’s, so while you can learn from the experience of others, when it comes to decisions about staying in your zone, you need to look within, monitor yourself, and identify what you need and when you need it. Base your decisions about taking breaks, multi-tasking, committing to deadlines, eliminating distraction, and how fast and how long you produce, on the arousal level you need to stay in your zone.”

While the brain has the ability to adapt to daily habits (a concept called “neuroplasticity”), working in audio adds an additional challenge: sensory stimulation. The environment of a mix stage (constant noise, dark room, and watching for long periods of time) can be demanding on the brain. As brain chemicals deplete, the ability to focus decreases, which makes it especially important to be aware of where you are on the scale, and where you need to be.

So, how do we get to our focus zone and stay there? We’ll take a closer look at this from each side of the curve. But first, we’ll look at what to do before starting the workday.

Before Work

Before you start working, it’s important to take time to plan for the day. Important mental processes, like prioritizing tasks, take the most effort, and therefore need to be done first (even before addressing any emails or calls). It’s crucial to take time to plan and schedule, because you may otherwise waste energy unnecessarily thinking about other tasks, or worse, run out of energy before you get to an important task. In David Rock’s book, Your Brain at Work, he offers the following suggestions for scheduling your day:

- Schedule the most attention-rich tasks when you have a fresh and alert mind
- Schedule blocks of time for different modes of thinking
- Prioritize prioritizing, as it’s an energy-intensive activity
- Save mental energy for prioritizing by avoiding other high-energy-consuming conscious activities, such as dealing with emails
- Think of conscious thinking as a precious resource to conserve

What this means is that it is a better use of energy to have scheduled blocks of time for emails/calls, editing, mixing, meetings, etc., as opposed to editing/mixing and fielding calls and emails simultaneously. Switching between tasks also takes energy, lowers productivity, and leaves room for errors. Scientist Harold Pashler found that performance falls 50%, or takes twice as long, when trying to do two tasks at the same time, versus focusing on just one. This only applies if you have to pay attention to both activities, so if you’re doing something, like driving or mixing on “auto-pilot,” there may not be as much of a loss. This doesn’t mean that activities such as emailing or texting won’t affect productivity, however. “A study done at the
University of London found that constant emailing and text-messaging reduces mental capability by an average of 10 points on an IQ test. It was five points for women, and 15 points for men. This effect is similar to missing a night’s sleep... ‘Always on’ may not be the most productive way to work [because] the brain is being forced to be on ‘alert’ far too much.” (Rock, 35)

While turning off all phones and emails may not be practical, there are steps we can still take that will help increase productivity. The key is to reduce how often you have to switch tasks. For example, try creating a system to separate important calls/emails (that are OK to interrupt you) from less important and personal matters. This may mean a work phone line that you ask everyone not to use unless they need an immediate response, or a separate email address for personal matters, mailing lists, etc., that you check at your discretion. Turn off unnecessary phone and email alerts so you can address non-urgent calls, texts, and messages at your discretion.

When scheduling your day, take large tasks and break them down into smaller tasks that you can use to set goals. Palladino says, “What research speaks to—and what our own experience tells us—is that breaking down tasks is extremely helpful. Your brain moves toward a small task and away from a large one. Every time you cross a task off your list, you give yourself a tiny boost of dopamine, the brain chemical responsible for the fact that ‘nothing succeeds like success.’”

If possible, try to schedule events to coincide with what type of stimulation you need during the day. If you’re typically dragging or losing focus after lunch, plan an activity that will give you a boost of motivation during that time (maybe your favorite element to work on - sound design, mixing music, etc.). The productivity of a meeting or a mix can be affected by whether you’re at the right stimulation level. Palladino also adds, “Generally, peak time for alertness is morning, but peak time for reaction time is afternoon.” Try experimenting the next time you have an option to have a client come at 10 a.m. or 4 p.m. Do you work more efficiently knowing that someone is coming, or are you more productive if you have flexibility? When is your attention to detail highest, and when are you getting distracted? Pay attention to what each feels like, what works best for you, and use that to your advantage.

The act of psyching up or connecting with positive feelings can give you a boost of dopamine, which can help raise your stimulation level and get into your zone faster when you’re ready to work. Elite athletes practice how they want to feel in competition (and it has proven to be effective), so picturing yourself doing activities and mentally preparing yourself will also increase the likelihood of achieving your goals.

Once you have your day blocked out by activity or tasks, it can help to create incentives as motivation to complete small tasks. Other tasks could even serve as an incentive, if it’s something you’re looking forward to doing. For example, a goal could be, “I’m going to finish mixing act 1, then I can make that phone call,” or “I’m going to edit for an hour, then I can check Facebook.” Dr. Palladino suggests, “If you want to get the biggest bang for your break-taking buck, you’ll get away from a screen. Take a short walk outside, do some yoga or meditation, or stand up and call an old friend or loved one whose voice you really like to hear. These activities will replenish, not further deplete, important brain chemicals. One way to disrupt the habit of surfing the Web or returning emails on break is to make a rule that you will stand up and walk outside and, once you’re out of the building, decide if you want to stay outside or go back to your screen.”

The work environment should ideally only be used for work, in an effort to train ourselves that when we are in that space, it is time to work. Palladino says, “Definitely take breaks away from your workstation, if possible outdoors. Avoid eating meals there, too. You want all cues to say, ‘Time to focus on work.’ I wouldn’t be too strict about
snacks. Sometimes, a nutritious snack can be the added stimulation you need to keep going, especially during low-blood sugar times in late afternoon.

What about when you get into your zone and don’t want to take a break because of it? In the long run, the benefits of a break (replenishing brain chemicals through exercise, relaxation, a conversation or a joke) may actually allow you the ability to focus longer. Plus, getting into your zone takes practice, and in time, will be something that happens quickly when you sit down to work. “You can get into your zone faster by paying attention to what it feels like when you’re there, and then act like yourself in that state of being. For example, how do you get to sleep at night? You get ready for bed, then get into position, then imitate a sleeping person until you become one. So get ready to enter your zone, get into position, then imitate a relaxed-alert person until you become one!”

What if you can’t keep focus or can’t get started? The first step is to acknowledge that you are out of your focus zone. On a scale of 0 to 10 (where 5 is ideal focus), where are you? Do you need to relax or psych up? Then, take the steps to get where you need to go (This may take some experimentation and learning what works for you.) For example, some people may need to take a break from not working in order to start working! If you are understimulated, then doing something that will generate dopamine may be enough stimulation to get you going again. Palladino suggests, “Raise your chair, get water, a cup of tea, a snack—whatever it takes to increase your stimulation and get yourself into your focus zone.”

If you’re getting started or haven’t been working long enough to take a break, generate dopamine by:

• Connecting with the rewards of the work you’re doing, and what it means for you: Will you feel personal satisfaction? Will it improve your skills? Will it generate more business? Will it lead to advancement? Is there someone you admire who’ll be impressed? What will you do with the money you’re earning?

• Have a touchstone of past successes: an award; an acknowledgment; an invoice. Choose one you’re proud of and keep it where you can see or touch it.

• Talk to someone out loud about the project, if you’d like, but don’t let the conversation take you away from the work. Make sure it leads you into it.

Palladino continues, “If you’ve been working long enough and you want to take a break, then leave your desk and listen to jokes or read something entertaining that gives you a boost of dopamine. These activities take you away from your task, so if you’re not on a break, it’s procrastination. Name it as such. Staying honest with yourself about avoidance is half the battle.

“Avoidance can get the best of us at times. If connecting with your motivation to be successful isn’t helping you beat it today, try connecting with the reality of your deadline, instead. For example, use a countdown clock on your smartphone, or set an alarm at intervals, having jotted down the amount of work you should have finished when the alarm goes off, to stay on track for finishing on time.” Use this technique only until you’re in your zone, at which point you can turn off the alarm (so it doesn’t become a distraction).

### Focusing on a Busy Mix Day

Dr. Palladino offers the following tips for when we anticipate high-stress periods of the day.

**Be Prepared:**

• **Face high-stress times well-rested and physically fit.** Sleep and exercise are evidence-based strategies shown to improve your attention span, especially under pressure.

• **Plan ahead for the most stressful times of the day by pacing yourself, especially your intake of caffeine and sugar.**

• **During less stressful times, practice specific ways to steady yourself during periods of high stress: take a few deep breaths, repeat an “anchor” word such as “calm,” use a touchstone (such as a wedding ring or favorite photo) to get back to center.**

• **Mentally rehearse the way you want to act, not react, when pressured.** (Elite athletes use mental rehearsal with great success. Well before an event, they envision and practice the mindset they want to have when things get real.)

In a high-stress environment, be aware that you have the same amount of brain chemicals as you do on a low-stress day. Chemicals can deplete from stress and sensory stimulation (such as sound/picture), so it’s important to check in during the day where you’re at on the scale. Breaks outside the studio are especially important in this environment, because it can give you the opportunity to conserve or possibly replenish brain chemicals. Being overstressed will also deplete brain chemicals faster, so it is important to learn what that feels like, and what works to bring you back into your focus zone. Are you relaxed, or tense? Being hyperfocused or overstimulated can look like your focus zone—both have deep concentration and involvement, a sense of challenge, and losing track of time. The difference is that hyperfocus has tension. The idea of an anchor or a touchstone is that you can calm yourself quickly using an object or a word. The more you practice using your anchor or touchstone (when you aren’t stressed), the more effective it will be when you use it under pressure.

Note your level of stimulation before work, as well. Is your commute a source of stress or overstimulation? If so, maybe listening to calming music or a relaxing phone conversation would help. Give yourself extra time, if it lowers...
your stress level. Are there any tasks you do at home that you could do at work before or after your shift (or vice versa)? Others may need a boost of stimulation in the morning to get going. In that case, ask yourself, where am I on the scale? Is this a good level of stimulation for me, or am I too high? Is this helpful, or could it be taking away from what I need during the day?

Monitoring yourself is especially crucial if you have a client review later in the day, where you need to be at your best. “Performance anxiety is a challenge under optimal circumstances, but your members have to deal with it at the end of the workday,” Palladino said.

After Work

Why is it that some days we feel completely exhausted and “fried,” and others we feel fine? It comes back to brain chemicals. If you are depleted of brain chemicals, it may leave you feeling exhausted and numb. While the day may go faster letting adrenaline rush under stress, it might be taking up the last of your energy for the day, too. Feeling fried or crashing may be the body trying to send an important message, and it’s important to take time to listen and regenerate when we have those sensations. “Prolonged stress has been linked to health concerns and a decreased life expectancy. So maybe a fried brain is like a blow dryer that stops working temporarily until the mechanism cools down enough to make it safe to operate again,” Palladino said. “If we don’t slow down from time to time, we miss the chance to check in with ourselves about the current course of our lives.”

Getting in your focus zone is about good planning, being aware, and having techniques to help you calm down (or get a boost) when needed. Maintaining awareness and taking breaks (away from the computer) will help sustain focus, make the day more productive, and allow more energy for the things we want to do outside the job.

Sources:

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

BEST SOUND MIXING
KIRK FRANCIS, CAS PRODUCTION SOUND MIXER
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TRADE SHOW:
REGAL (MARBLE ARCH)
FRIDAY EVENING
JUNE 21 at 11.15
Distributed by WARBOUR
Many film sound historians consider 1933’s *King Kong* to be the first film which incorporated the use of sound design in the making of the soundtrack. There is good reason for this consideration. Several of the creatures in *King Kong*, including Kong himself, required imagination and creativity to give them a voice. Although the work on *Kong* was groundbreaking, I believe that Hitchcock’s work on the first British ‘talkie,’ *Blackmail*, was truly innovative and should be considered as the first use of many of the sound design principles which are still in practice today. This paper will include an analysis of the use of sound in *Blackmail* and show how these sounds support the narrative of the film in a way that had not been put into practice prior to this film. Hitchcock is considered the “Master of Suspense,” and his use of sound is no small contribution to this success.

It is first necessary to have a cursory understanding of what sound design is and how it is used in creating a soundtrack for a film. According to Stanley Alten, one definition of sound design is “the vision that harmonizes the various elements with the visual story by creating the overall sonic character of a production.” Wikipedia defines sound design as “the process of specifying, acquiring and manipulating audio elements. It is employed in a variety of disciplines including film, theatre, music recording, live music performance, and computer game software development. Sound design most commonly involves the manipulation of previously composed audio, such as previously recorded music and sound effects. In some instances it may also involve the composition or manipulation of audio to create a desired effect or mood.” The designation of Sound Designer is attributed to Francis Ford Coppola in describing the work done on *Apocalypse Now* by Walter Murch. Murch won the Academy Award for Best Sound Mixing in 1979 as a result of his work on *Apocalypse Now*. The title was also soon given to Ben Burtt for his work on *Star Wars*, also in 1979. Sound design for film is applied in three primary categories: dialogue, music, and sound effects. Within these delineations, there are subgroups which further break down the categories as follows:

1. **Dialogue**
   a. Production dialogue—Dialogue recorded during filming.
   b. Post-production dialogue (ADR).
   c. Walla—Crowd murmurs and off-stage voices.
2. **Music**
   a. Diegetic music—Music from sources seen on screen.
      Non-diegetic music—Underscore and mood music.
   b. Music as an effect—Using musical instruments to create the sounds of on-screen actions.
3. **Sound Effects**
   a. Foley—The sounds of movement of people and objects.
   b. Hard effects—Door slams, explosions, doorbells, phone rings.
   c. Designed effects—Using manipulated sounds to create new and unnatural combinations.
   d. Ambience—The sonic space in which the scene takes place.

It is important to consider that the information contained in the outline above reveals the elements used in the creation of the film soundtrack but ignores the creative decisions that drive the way they are used. These choices lay at the heart of sound design as an art form.

Hitchcock’s use of sound in the “talkie” version of *Blackmail* reveals an innovative use of many of these sound design principles. *Blackmail* was originally produced in 1929 as a silent film, but Hitchcock felt that sound for film was not “a mere flash in the pan” and had always intended this film to have synchronous dialogue. Once the silent version was completed, Hitchcock was given the go-ahead to convert the film to a talking version. At this time, there was good reason to continue to make silent films. Very few theaters were equipped with sound reproducing systems and the economic necessity of wide distribution kept silent film alive. Hitchcock describes his preparation for adding sound to *Blackmail*: “When producing the film in silent form, I was imagining all the time that it was a talkie. I was using talkie...
technique, but without sound." This paper will investigate the outcome of Hitchcock’s imaginative techniques and how they manifest themselves on the screen. Examples will come from the use of dialogue, music and sound effects in *Blackmail*.

**Use of Dialogue in Blackmail**

Cinema scholars have argued that there are two primary approaches to the use of dialogue in film. The first approach is to represent the authenticity of the sound produced in a space, and the second is to maintain intelligibility of the dialogue, regardless of what we see in the image. One can hear Hitchcock’s experimentation with these approaches throughout the film. As stated earlier, Hitchcock had always intended for *Blackmail* to be a talking picture and his shooting approach reflected that desire. Many scenes from the silent version, which were incorporated into the talkie version, were shot from the back of the actors to conceal lip and mouth movements. This allowed the inclusion of dialogue, recorded in post production, to be added to the existing footage. Eight minutes into the film, we hear the first use of dialogue. The Detective Sergeant and Detective Webber (Frank) are walking down a hallway in Scotland Yard and we hear the first conversation of the film. The dialogue is somewhat unintelligible and reflects the Authenticity approach. As we move with the two policemen, they enter the men’s locker room, where a gathering of several men is taking place, perhaps indicating a shift change. All of the dialogue for this sequence was done in post production and there is no synchronous sound. This was the first use of Walla in *Blackmail*. This innovation cannot be attributed solely to Hitchcock, as we hear Walla in the nightclub scenes from *The Jazz Singer* two years earlier. Hitchcock’s real innovation, as it pertains to dialogue, came about when converting the silent version to a talking version. Hitchcock had cast Czechoslovakian actress Anny Ondra as the lead, Alice White, in the silent version of *Blackmail*. Ondra had a very strong Eastern European accent and spoke very little English. He did not want to replace Ondra in the sound version and had to come up with a new way to make this transition possible. His solution to this problem was to have an English actress, Joan Barry, serve a new function on the set. The voice heard coming from Alice White is actually being spoken off stage, in real time, while Ondra mouths the words on screen. This was a brilliant solution and worked out fairly well in the film. One may notice a slight hesitation as Alice delivers her dialogue on screen. The two actresses spent many hours rehearsing together in order to make this a reality. When one pays close attention to the soundtrack during these dialogue scenes, one can hear a spatial change between the dialogue that is spoken on camera by the rest of the cast, and the lines delivered by Barry. In order to facilitate this new approach, the microphone used to record Barry was here much closer to the source than the microphone used to record the on-camera dialogue. The difference in proximity allows for more sonic interaction with the space being recorded on the microphone which is farther away from the talent. In essence, the on-camera dialogue is indicative of the Authentic approach to the use of sound and the off-camera dialogue spoken by Barry illustrates the Intelligible approach. These two approaches were juxtaposed in the final edit, giving the soundtrack a bit of a jerky feel. An additional experiment with the use of dialogue can be heard in the scene where Alice is seated at the kitchen table, having committed murder in self-defense by using a knife the night before.

The neighborhood Gossip is visiting the news shop, which is owned by Alice’s parents. The subject of this day’s gossip is the murder, which happened “right around the corner” last night. The Gossip goes on and on about the use of a knife. The film cuts to a close-up of Alice, seated in a catatonic state listening to her own mind. In order to change the sonic perspective of the audience from the casual observer to that of what is happening inside Alice’s head, Hitchcock experimented with the Gossip’s dialogue. Hitchcock talks about his approach to this scene, “I think this kind of effect may be justified. There have always been occasions when we have needed to show a phantasmagoria of the mind in terms of visual imagery. So we may want to show someone’s mental state by letting him listen to
some sound—let us say church bells—and making them clang with distorted insistence in his head.” He would drop the level of the words, which surrounded the word “knife,” making them unintelligible and would raise the level when the word “knife” was spoken, sometimes even to the point of distortion. This was a great example of Hitchcock’s working with the concepts of Authenticity versus Intelligibility. Michel Chion questions the success of this experiment. He describes it as a “blurring of the voice,” and feels that it draws our attention to the technical aspects of the sound rather than the subjective experience of hearing it. Whether it works, or not, is not the point. What is really important here is that Hitchcock was willing to try a new approach in an attempt to use dialogue to reinforce the text of this film. There are many more examples of Hitchcock’s experimentation with dialogue in Blackmail, but when considering the entire sound design of the film, we must also consider his use of music to reinforce the text of his film.

**Use of Music in Blackmail**

Some form of musical accompaniment has always existed in the cinema. The first use of music with film is attributed to the Lumière Brothers in their first public screening of a projected motion picture in 1895. A piano played while the films were projected. The purpose of this accompaniment was twofold. The first purpose was to conceal the noise of the loud projecting equipment and the second was for the entertainment value of the music itself. As the technology in film advanced, the advent of synchronized sound became commonplace. The first film to include synchronized music was Warner Bros.’ Don Juan in 1926. While there was no dialogue used in Don Juan, it was a masterful illustration of the power of purposed music in film. Often, music arrangers of the day would take themes from popular classical compositions and transform them for film music. There is little doubt that music can be a powerful means to evoke a feeling in the listener. In his article “Designing a Movie for Sound,” Randy Thom describes some of “sound’s talents.” Thom has the benefit of hindsight when citing these examples, but one can clearly see that Hitchcock had insights into these ideas in the early days of sound in cinema. In an interview in 1933, Hitchcock revealed his understanding of the power of music in film. “The first and obvious use [of music] is atmospheric; to create excitement; to heighten intensity. In a scene of action, for instance, when the aim is to build up to a physical climax, music adds excitement just as effectively as cutting.” Additionally, “It is in the psychological use of music, which, you will observe, they knew something about before the talkies, that the great possibilities lie. It makes it possible to express the unspoken.” At several points in Blackmail, one can see the depth of Hitchcock’s comprehension of the use of music in film. Musical motifs are associated with certain characters, like the theme played whenever the story revolves around the police. Another good example would be when we hear the theme from the song performed by Cyril Ritchard in the Artist’s apartment, “Miss Up-to-Date,” thoughts of the Artist come to mind, whether or not he appears on screen. This happens several times in the film after the Artist is murdered. Hitchcock was quick to include this live musical number in his first sound film after observing the success of The Jazz Singer. Another scene which exemplifies Hitchcock’s innovation was the one in which the Artist invites Alice up to his loft. For this scene, Hitchcock borrowed a visual technique derived from German Expressionist films. He placed the camera on an elevator and...
The cameo appearance

tracked the progression of the two characters up several flights of stairs, ending at the entrance to the Artist’s loft. The music, arranged by Hubert Bath and Harry Stafford, included several high-pitched instruments. Strings, woodwinds, and horns were punctuated to reflect the footsteps and increased in pitch as the couple climbed the steps. This served to increase the tension of the moment and created foreboding about future events. Following the murder, Alice, in a trance-like state, gathers her belongings and tries to eliminate any evidence of her ever being in the loft. The underscore here is a melancholy arrangement of “Miss Up-to-Date,” at a very slow tempo, distorted in such a way to reflect the inner thoughts of the character. She dresses and sneaks quietly out of the apartment and with each step we hear a staccato string pluck emphasizing her stealth during her exit. These were very new uses for non-diegetic music in a feature film. Walt Disney made a similar use of music to emphasize action in his first cartoon, Steamboat Willie, one year earlier in 1928. Hitchcock understood the importance of a musical underscore and summed this up in 1933 to say, “The basis of cinema’s appeal is emotional. Music’s appeal is to a great extent emotional, too. To neglect music, I think, is to surrender, willfully or not, a chance of progress in filmmaking.”

Hitchcock went on, successfully, to find creative uses for the musical score in many future film projects which he directed. The violin’s punctuated screeches, in sync with Mother stabbing Marion, in the famous shower scene from Psycho (1960) immediately come to mind. If dialogue and music were the only sound design tools at Hitchcock’s disposal, the film would still be groundbreaking but he also took full advantage of the use of sound effects to aide with the text of Blackmail.

Use of Sound Effects in Blackmail

Not unlike music, sound effects have been a part of live theater since the Greeks created the Western theater sometime during the first millennium B.C. The importance of adding sound to augment storytelling has been an accepted practice which made its way into the world of cinema in the earliest days of the art. Don Juan not only had a synchronous musical score, but also included sound effects which were synchronous. The sounds of swords clanging are an integral part of the film. While Hitchcock had these examples available to him, prior to the making of Blackmail, he had determined to use sound effects in an expansive manner. According to Elisabeth Weis, Hitchcock took great pride in his control of the soundtrack. He would frequently spend time after his films were edited and create a script for the addition of sound to his project. In today’s parlance, this is known as a “spotting session.” This was a truly innovative approach to dealing with sound in cinema. Weis classifies Hitchcock’s use of sound effects in his early works as Expressionistic in nature. She defines Expressionism “in the traditional film context, which denotes visual (or aural) distortion of time, space, or sound as a means of rendering visible (or audible) interior truths or feelings.”

In an interview with Francois Truffaut, Hitchcock emphasized the importance of sound effects and the choices for those sounds. He stated that, “To describe a sound effect accurately, one has to imagine its equivalent in dialogue.” No sound used in a Hitchcock film is without purpose and will advance the text of that film in some way.

The first sound effect we hear in Blackmail is the sound of a car horn. This occurs about five minutes into the film. The police have captured a criminal suspect and are transporting him to the station for questioning. As the truck arrives at the station, the sound of car horns and truck pass-bys are heard, establishing the exterior space which gives the audience a sense of the sonic environment surrounding the station. This is the first time that sound was used to create atmosphere and, although somewhat minimal in nature, still successfully achieves its goal. The audience can sense the hustle and bustle which occurs in the space surrounding the New Scotland Yard. A few scenes later, as Alice and Frank exit the building, we are again exposed to exterior traffic noise. As they cross paths with a group of Bobbies, we hear the marching of feet in a rhythmic pattern, almost resembling the sound of a heartbeat; the unity of the steps perhaps reflecting the orderly nature of the occupation. Frank takes Alice to lunch at a busy restaurant and Hitchcock reinforces the visuals of the large crowd vying for tables by adding a Walla track of many voices. Later in the film, as Alice wanders the streets of London after committing murder, we hear a variety of sounds which contrast her internal turmoil and isolation, which are established through visuals, with the busy sounds of people interacting with one another on the sidewalks. This ironic contrast served to emphasize her mental anguish. Alice returns to her home after a night of aimless wandering and sneaks into her bed before anyone suspects that she was out all night. As she enters her home, Hitchcock experiments with the use of sonic perspective by fading the exterior
noise out as Alice enters and closes the front door. Soon, Alice’s mother comes to wake her up and opens the window blinds and removes the cover from the bird cage in Alice’s room. We hear the sound of the bird’s song at very high amplitude, to the point of annoyance. This sound helps to establish Alice’s feeling of guilt and her desire to report the events of the previous evening. She was anticipating her need to confess or “sing like a bird” to the police. Alice joins the family for breakfast without speaking a word. During this sequence, Hitchcock establishes the sound of customers coming and going from the shop with the light tinkle of a bell as the door opens and closes. This doorbell sound is normal and expected. Suddenly, a loud, singularly distorted ring is heard over a close-up shot of Alice’s face. This creates anticipation of the reveal of Frank entering the store. Alice will now have to confess her guilt to Frank, who already has knowledge that Alice was in the Artist’s apartment the night before. Frank had discovered Alice’s glove in the loft while investigating the murder that morning. In addition to the sound we hear in this film, it must also be noted that Hitchcock was very aware of the use of silence, when necessary, to advance the story line, draw attention to the visual component, and create a stark contrast with the sounds we do hear. This silence also encourages the audience members to listen to their individual internal voices, or dialogues, in reaction to the viewing experience.

From the examples cited above, one can see that Hitchcock had given a great deal of thought on how to successfully use sound effects in augmenting the text of the film. While many of the sounds chosen were not complex or particularly beautiful, each of them was used to create a feeling in the audience’s reception of the film. Hitchcock went on to explore the use of sound effects throughout his career with great effectiveness, drawing attention to detail that the visual component could not singularly accomplish.

### Conclusion

Hitchcock’s filmmaking genius can be seen throughout his career. With the advent of the sound film, he became a trendsetter in the use of sound. It was believed by some cinema scholars that the addition of synchronous sound to a highly developed silent film industry would result in the loss of quality filmmaking. Belton makes reference to a book by Rudolph Arnheim, in which he illustrates this apprehension; “theorists of the silent film, such as Arnheim, viewed sound as a form of ‘noise’ that interfered with the eloquent ‘speech’ of silent film stylistics.”17 Hitchcock’s attitude was the antithesis of this thinking; he felt that sound was a natural element for inclusion in filmmaking and would enhance the art.

Admittedly, *King Kong* (1933) brought sound design principles to a whole new plateau. The truly powerful and emotional score created by Max Steiner was innovative in scope and form. Murray Spivak exuded brilliance in the creation of the sounds of Kong and the dinosaurs in the film, especially when considering the technology available to him at that time. However, consideration must be given to the four additional years of experimentation with sound in film that occurred between the making of *Blackmail* and *King Kong*. Many of the sound design ideas put forward by Steiner and Spivak were certainly influenced by what came before and Hitchcock laid a good deal of groundwork from which to expand upon.

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**The Artist serenades Alice**

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### Footnotes

CAS Picnic 2013
On August 18, CAS members and their families enjoyed the 2nd Annual CAS Picnic. The day started with delicious coal-fired burgers, hot dogs, and classic sides that were provided by Big Time Catering. Dorothea Sargent, Steve Hawk, and Patti Fluhr worked tirelessly providing snacks, games, cake, and activities in preparation of the event.

Games began with a girls vs. boys tug-of-war battle featuring the children. The girls very enthusiastically took the gold, winning best out of three. All children were then awarded participation prizes and quickly cleared the field for the main battle: The 2nd Annual Production vs. Post Tug-of-War. This year, Post took the first win, but was finally defeated thereafter for the next two rounds. Production walked away a touch taller for the second year in a row.

Later, a piñata was presented to the children featuring a movie slate decorated with the names of key event planners listed as director and cameraman. The children delighted in candy and treats.

Finally, the cake was cut after a heartwarming round of “Happy Birthday,” commemorating CAS’ 50th anniversary, which was led by President David Fluhr. Members and their families enjoyed the strawberry cream creation, while Bob Bronow, the event’s master of ceremonies, announced the winners of the raffle, which included gift cards, hats, T-shirts, and Dodgers tickets. All guests left with CAS–embossed “flying discs.”

The event continues to be a favorite among members, allowing us all a moment to strengthen our personal connections with one another and introduce our families. We’re looking forward to next year for the 3rd Annual CAS Family Picnic. We can’t wait to see you there!

by Karol Urban, CAS
Michael Barry CAS completed mixing for Lee Daniels’ The Butler, TWC, at Harbor Sound. Also completed mixing with Eliza Paley on The Harvest at Parabolic. Completed mixing with Sean Garnhart on Gods Behaving Badly and Big Beach at Digital Cinema. And completed HBO’s Mike Tyson: Undisputed Truth at C-5.

From Robert Sharmann CAS: In the last quarter, I finished up Season 2 of ABC Family’s Peabody Award-winning show Switched at Birth, with boom operator Aaron Grice and utility Michael Kaleta. Next was a Kristen Wiig character piece through Gary Sanchez Productions, Welcome to Me. My other great boom operator, Richard Bullock, joined me there as Aaron Grice went to Chicago to boom for friend and colleague, David Barr-Yaffe CAS. After grabbing a couple of commercials along the way, thanks to Bill Martel CAS, I am starting Horrible Bosses 2, with an entirely new crew—boom operator Kevin Hyde and utility Kevin Becker. Hoping the new year starts off as well as this one finished!

Peter F. Kurland CAS and Randy Johnson were the production sound team on Inside Llewyn Davis, the Coen Brothers’ film scheduled for a mid-December release. We worked alongside a number of hardworking utility people and playback operators. All of Oscar Isaac’s musical performances were recorded live on set with no playback for any take or angle. Re-recording was done by Skip Lievsay CAS and Greg Orloff CAS and nicely, too.

After the inconvenience of Technicolor Montreal closing much of their operations, Gavin Fernandez CAS has a sci-fi fall all lined up. September had him mixing the feature Orion, he then moves on to the series Helix for several months. Features start up again in April and are booked through the summer … life’s good.

It’s been a busy year for Jon Ailetcher CAS. Starting off the year, I was working a History Channel show called God, Guns & Automobiles in Butler, MO. Joining me in Missouri were Mark Patino and

Devin Golub CAS. On returning to Los Angeles, I started a new ABC comedy called Trophy Wife, with Javier M. Hernandez swinging the stick and Jason Brooks handling utility duties and so much more.

Thomas Curley CAS mixed the feature length version of the 2013 Sundance short competition winner Whiplash, with David Stark on boom, Michael O’Heny on utility/playback/2nd boom and Richard Henderson as music supervisor and on-set Pro Tools. Also, periodically mixing for the UFO doc 701.

Me and my crew, Robert Maxfield-boom op, and Dennis Sanborn-utility, completed Season 4 of The Walking Dead in November and are currently shooting Season 1 of Halt & Catch Fire for AMC.

–Michael P. Clark CAS

Steven A. Morrow CAS is currently working in Mississippi with boom operator Craig Dollinger on a bio pic about James Brown entitled Get On Up. Jeff Blehr is our fantastic utility sound.

Gerry Lentz CAS and Andrew Kantos have taken over mixing duties on Warner Bros. Stage 11 in Burbank. Currently mixing Betrayal and Super Fun Night, both for ABC Network. Coming soon, Shameless and several episodes of Witches of the East End.

From our friends at Sony: Our feature mix stages at Sony Pictures Post Production Services have some new talent, which will certainly enhance our already impressive talent pool. Re-recording mixers Chris Jenkins and Dean Zupancic have recently joined the Sony Pictures Post Services team. Paul Massey CAS is currently working on The Monuments Men, directed by George Clooney, and will be teaming up with his partner David Giammarco on London Calling, starting in January of this coming year. Chris Jenkins and Dean Zupancic will join forces on Heaven Is for Real, directed by Randall Wallace, which will start mixing in November. Jeff

Haboush CAS and Chris Carpenter will be starting the mix on The Game Stands Tall, directed by Thomas Carter. Chris is also scheduled to mix Heat, directed by Simon West, with Deb Adair CAS in the next couple of months. Tateum Kohut CAS and Greg Orloff CAS are currently mixing Family Moon for Happy Madison’s production team. Paul Ottosson CAS is currently working on Jerry Bruckheimer’s Beware the Night, directed by Scott Derrickson.

This year has been incredibly busy for the Sony Post Services TV Sound Department. Elmo Ponsdomenech, partnering with Todd Beckett on Stage 7, have been working on the hugely successful The Blacklist for NBC and will be starting work soon on Rake, starring Greg Kinnear for FOX as well as Deep Tech for HBO. Rusty Smith and Robert Edmondson CAS just completed a full season on Showtime’s critically acclaimed Masters of Sex and History Channels’ upcoming epic miniseries Bonnie & Clyde. Fred Tator CAS and Bill Jackson CAS are currently working on The Goldbergs for ABC and will be starting on Showtime’s House of Lies and CBS’s Bad Teacher shortly. Fred and Bill also provided their mixing talents on Ridley Scott’s Vatican Tapes. Terry O’Bright CAS and Nick Offord are working on the current season of Unforgettable for CBS and just completed Lifetime’s Lizzie Borden, starring Christina Ricci. In closing, our Post Sound Services team wish everybody in the CAS and their families a very happy holiday season. Sincerely, Tom McCarthy CAS.

Philip Perkins CAS spent the summer and fall recording and mixing the live musical performance feature Oil and Water (featuring the San Francisco Mime Troupe—no, not silent mime), mixing Mark Lipman’s Street of Dreams (PBS), Debra Chasnoff’s Choosing Children: The Back Story (PBS), Kyung Lee’s Tales (PBS), and the EDC series for Citizen Film.

I am shooting the Book of Exodus for Ridley Scott in the UK and Spain.
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We have just completed the first four weeks at Pinewood Studios and have now moved to Spain. We are due to complete in mid-January 2014. We are shooting in 3D with a basic four-camera setup on each shot! We are about to shoot the first battle scene next week with an additional six cameras. There does not seem a lot of time for a social chat. I have my trusted crew with me: key boom Gary Dodkin, 2nd boom Lloyd Dudley and sound PA Alayan Crespo. Jorge Adrados and his crew are covering the 2nd unit. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas.

–David Stephenson CAS/AMPS

Devendra Cleary CAS reporting from Stage 14 at Raleigh Hollywood: Life After Beth was an amazing summer project! Look for it summer 2014. What a pleasure to work with my good buddy and DP Jay Hunter whom I’ve known since we were 19 years old. Chris “Catfish” Walmer stepped up to 1st boom on this one, with Christopher Silverman joining us on 2nd boom and utility. Life after Life After Beth was fortunate as well. Catfish and I jumped onto the Mixology series for ABC. Kenneth Strain on the boom with Tim Salmon guesting occasionally. These guys make it look easy as they thread that boom between hundreds of overhead par cans and pin lights. Look for this series starting midseason. During this time, I have been enjoying putting the Sound Devices Pix 260i through its paces on the cart. Working with Paul Isaacs, Phillip W. Palmer CAS, Scott Harber CAS, David Barr-Yaffe CAS and Brett Grant-Grierson CAS as we all embark on this new piece technology.

Howdy all! Bob Wald CAS here! Well, I don’t know if this actually qualifies as a “Been There Done That” entry … On October 1, I officially retired, very loosely speaking. I decided to remain an “active retiree so that I can still have a voice and vote. PLUS, if some really cool show just happened to come along… Who knows! But honestly, it would have to be a comedy because I’ve had all the drama I can take! In the meantime, I now own a company called Body Archer LLC. We manufacture and market a very clever health and fitness device called, appropriately enough, the Body Archer (www.bodyarcher.com). But, just to keep from getting to be an old “has been,” I’m keeping up with all the new sound stuff, and I have a decent little studio here at home. Thanks very much to all of you who helped me along my own journey as a production sound mixer. I remember you all and I really do appreciate everything you did for me! Please stay in touch! I’m on Facebook, Twitter (@robertwald) and, of course, by email (robertwald@icloud.com). Cheers!

We are currently halfway through Season 9 of the one-hour drama Criminal Minds. Todd Bassman, boom, and Bill Shotland, 2nd boom, Wishing everyone a great year.

–Joseph Geisinger CAS

Frank Morrone CAS is teaming up with Cory Mandel to mix Justin Bieber’s 3D movie Believe at Technicolor. Frank just wrapped mixing Season 2 of BBC America’s drama Copper for Barry Levinson and Tom Fontana.

Chuck Fitzpatrick CAS is out slumming it on commercials these days. He
figures he did his time doing the impressive hard jobs with the killer hours. Now he’s enjoying the inner peace that comes with a gig on which he sometimes moves just one fader.

**Michael Keller** CAS and Chris Jenkins have finished mixing **300 Rise of an Empire** for Zack Snyder and Michael Keller and Mike Prestwood Smith are currently finishing up **The Seventh Son** for Legendary Pictures on Warner Bros. Stage 9.

Tom Hartig, my friend and boom op, and I have been going nonstop since the spring. First on assignment in Boston and western Massachusetts on Warner Bros.’ **The Judge**, starring Robert Downey Jr. and Robert Duvall, and directed by David Dobkin. From there we ended up in Berlin, Germany, for New Regency where we are now filming **The Business Trip**, starring Vince Vaughn and Tom Wilkinson and directed by Ken Scott. We’ll be here until Halloween and then return to Boston for the final leg of this film; then, home for the holidays. Warm hugs, **Mark Ulano** CAS

**Mark Hopkins McNabb** CAS with boom operators Jeff Norton and Paul Miller are back for Season 2 of **The Neighbors**, ABC at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays. It is simply the most fun show I’ve ever worked on! When you see it, you’ll know why. Have a great season. Thanks to all at CAS, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

**Scott Harber** CAS recently ended the summer with two back-to-back pilots for Comedy Central and Amazon after finishing the Dan Fogelman-directed movie **Imagined**, with Al Pacino, Bobby Cannavale, Annette Bening and Jennifer Garner. From there he looked up and he was on Season 6 of **Castle**. Fortunately, he was surrounded by John Agalsoff Jr. and Jeremy Brill, the best crew anyone could ever wish for. But wait, they figured out how to get the show shot in less time allowing Sr. Harber to have something resembling a life outside of work.

After finishing up **Hit the Floor** for VH1 this summer, **Joe Earle** CAS and Doug Andham CAS have been mixing the new **American Horror Story: Coven** and Season 4 of **Glee** for Ryan Murphy Television on Stage 6 at Technicolor at Paramount, as well as starting mixes for Alfonso Gomez-Rejon’s feature **The Town That Dreaded Sundown**, and are looking forward to starting the new series **Mind Games**, for ABC Television.

With the first snow of the season already here, **David Barr-Yaffe** CAS is currently freezing his little mixing fingers off in the awesome city of Chicago doing ABC’s new midseason show **Mind Games**, with Aaron Grice and our new local friend, Patrick Bresnahan, who, by the way, is a great utility person, in case any of our brothers or sisters will be working there in the future.

**John Pritchett** CAS, along with boom op Dave Roberts and utility Kay Colvin finished **Parkland** earlier this year. The story of what happened at and around Parkland Hospital on the day of Kennedy’s assassination, was particularly meaningful to John as he was actually there at the scene in Dallas that fateful day. John
It’s been a busy last quarter for Richard Lightstone CAS and his crew of boom op Colin Campbell and utility Jesse Kaplan. Just completed the pilot of Kirby Buckets and the next day began the feature How to Make Love Like an Englishman, directed by Tom Vaughan, starring Pierce Brosnan, Salma Hayek and Jessica Alba.

Jonathan Gaynor CAS spent the latter half of the summer in Atlanta with boom ruffian Tim Cargioli recording 20th Century Fox’s Let’s Be Cops. Then we traveled to one of our favorite film-friendly cities, Savannah, GA, for the live-action bits of Paramount Pictures’ SpongeBob SquarePants 2, aided/enabled by the always courageous utility 2nd boom Elanor Rimassa. In between, we day-played on the various TV extravaganzas that the Carolinas and our mixer friends had to offer.

I began the year finishing off Non Stop, starring Liam Neeson and directed by Jaume Collet Serra. Reshoots for Now You See Me followed. I took on some second unit shooting on Spider-Man and rolled into This Is Where I Leave You, directed by Shawn Levy and filming in New York. I took most of the summer off to spend time with my 6-month-old grandson (now 10 months) but broke off for 10 days to travel with former President Bill Clinton on his Global Initiative visit to six countries in Africa. The documentary, directed by Martin Scorsese, will probably be released by HBO, I am now working in New York on John Wick, starring Keanu Reeves. Best to all. –Danny Michael CAS

As I write, I am two weeks from the end of my fourth season as production mixer on Game of Thrones for HBO. The show earned me a Primetime Emmy nomination this year for EP4 Season 3. And Now His Watch Has Ended. Last year, we were fortunate to win the Emmy for Season 2 EP9 Blackwater. I have recently received a nomination for a TEC Award for GOT Season 3. The year started with Starred Up, a feature film directed by David Mackenzie and was followed by Miss Julie, a feature film starring Jessica Chastain and Colin Farrell. Directed by Liv Ullmann. Best wishes, Ronan Hill CAS

After finishing up the second half of Season 4 on TNT’s Rizzoli & Isles at Technicolor, the mix team of Rich Weingart CAS and Michael Colomby CAS are having fun at Todd-AO’s Lantana facility mixing Season 2 of ABC’s Nashville. They are also gearing up at Todd-AO’s Hollywood location for the upcoming show Those Who Kill for the A&E network.

Gary D. Rogers CAS and Dan Hiland CAS are currently mixing the fourth season of The Walking Dead, second season of Arrow, and the third season of Hart of Dixie on Dub Stage 1 at Warner Bros. Burbank.

Glenn Berkovitz CAS and his alternating boom crew of Ken Beauchene, John Hays, Johnny Evans and Daniel Quintana have been busy this summer/fall day-playing on commercials and second units. Planning to settle into the IFC series Maron in November … and then, a new year—anything goes!

Paul James Zahnley CAS wrapped mixing on the feature Sold, starring Gillian Anderson and David Arquette. It was directed by Jeffrey Brown and is to be released in 2014. Paul also wrapped mixes on Everything Comes from the Streets, directed by Alberto López Pulido, Beautiful Sin for Azul Films, and Keeper of the Beat for David L. Brown. He continues to mix Aerial America for the Smithsonian Channel.

Jeff Vaughn CAS is pleased to be scoring weekly on LA’s scoring stages for Season 2 of NBC’s Revolution. Mixing 2013 includes scores for Identity Thief, Thanks for Sharing and Ride Along (2014), for composer Christopher Lennertz. Recording with the crew at Sonic Fuel Studios, El Segundo, we are proud of our contributions to new VG releases from Microsoft for Xbox One.

Dave Schaaf CAS recently wrapped production of Table 47 in Colorado. Boom operator on this indie feature was Joel Walker.

I have been busy working on pilots and commercials and the movie Ride. Ride was the hardest movie I have worked on during my career. In part of the story, Helen Hunt takes surf lessons from Luke Wilson. We spent about two weeks out on the ocean, and the rest of the movie on tough locations along the coast, mainly in Venice. A huge thanks to Ace Williams-utility, Johny Evans and Jim Castro, booming. I hope you have all been gainfully employed and doing well. Thanks, Coleman Metts CAS
Steve Weiss CAS mixed Body of Proof at the Disney lot before taking over on Major Crimes, with Keith Birchfield on boom and Dennis Carlin at utility. Currently, the team is at Culver Studios working HBO’s comedy Deep Tech.

From Universal Studio Sound: ’Tis the season for Frankie Montano and Jon Taylor CAS as they just finished Universal’s The Best Man Holiday, directed by Malcolm Lee at the Hitchcock Theater. This duo will mix it up in Studio 6 as well, because it’s Universal’s Endless Love, directed by Shana Feste. In Studio 1, Ken Kobett CAS and Mark Fleming CAS are mixing Warehouse 13, Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D., Ragtag, and Intelligence. Joe DeAngelis and Bill Freesh CAS in Studio 2 are handling the town of Banshee. In Studio 5, Peter Nusbaum CAS and Whitney Purple are mixing Sirens, The Mindy Project, Ground Floor, Sean Saves the World, and Undateable. Studio A is mixer John Cook CAS’s foundation for Last Man Standing, then goes green with Robert Carr on Parks & Recreation; propping up the Trophy Wife on the beat with Brooklyn Nine-Nine; they also hit Cougar Town and then continue on Surviving Jack. In Studio B, mixers Alan Decker CAS and Nello Torri CAS are working on Grimm, Bates Motel, Covert Affairs and Homeland.

In Studio G, it’s all about Peter Reale and Todd Morrissey mixing the hottest shows like Chicago PD, Chicago Fire and Special Victims Unit and then cooling it off in style with Suits.

Woody Woodhall CAS has kept busy with a number of television series that keep getting picked up. Knocking wood … Those series include finishing up Season 4 of Mystery Diners for Food Network, as well as Season 4 of Storage Hunters for truTV. Woody was also supervising sound editor and re-recording mixer for Oxygen’s What Did I Do Last Night and Animal Planet’s Alaska Gold Diggers and has just completed supervising sound editing the new series for Nat Geo, Divine Intervention. His post organization, The Los Angeles Post Production Group (LAPPG.com) continues to grow, now with a worldwide membership of more than 2,500. Woody, fellow CAS mem-

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Fred Ginsburg and the LAPPG presented Audio for Indie Film at this year’s HollyShorts Film Festival. Woody has also been tapped by the ProVideo Coalition to be the author of the blog channel Sound for Film and will also be participating at this year’s Entertainment Technology Expo (ETE #13) as a panelist for ProVideo Coalition.

Greetings and Happy Thanksnukkab to all (the last time for another 70K or so years)! I am busy working in my chosen field here in greater Hollywood, CA. After wrapping Neighbors (née “Townies”) this spring, I had a nice early summer doing additional photography on Thor 2: The Dark World and various day calls. More recently, having reunited with the endlessly entertaining Knox White, and keeping a tight hold on John “The Hardest Working Man in Show Business” Sheridan, we completed another motion picture shot in Los Angeles, Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day for Disney. This is based upon a rather slim volume that I used to read to my daughter (now in law school); I never would have imagined it as a movie. We’ve opened it up a bit, as they say. We then jumped directly onto the new TNT series The Last Ship; we did the pilot a year ago and we should be on this post-apocalyptic Navy-themed actioner for as long as it takes to shoot another nine episodes. We’ve been exploring the outer reaches of the studio zone and will spend some time in San Diego, back on the actual destroyer, before we settle in at Manhattan Beach Studios for a while. The gear all seems to be working (keyna hora, knock wood, whatever), still riding the bike, my wife and daughter are well. Thanks to all my crew people, friends and vendors for all your support!

–Steve Nelson

On Todd-AO Burbank Stage 2, Keith Rogers CAS and Scott Weber are enjoying their new mixing stage and busy mixing Hostages and Season 3 of Person of Interest for CBS. In the new year, they will begin mixing Halt & Catch Fire for AMC and Perception for TNT.

Karol Urban CAS is mixing FX for Grey’s Anatomy alongside Todd Langner.
as well as the series *Thicker Than Water* for Bravo at Westwind Media. Additionally, she is finishing mix on the intimate biographical documentary *Dino Costa: Truth Unscripted*, for the festival circuits and the hysterical romantic comedy *Muffin Top: A Love Story*, with partner Steve Urban.

**Steve Guercio** CAS, recently wrapped *Hard Knocks: Training Camp* with the Cincinnati Bengals. This is a co-production of NFL Films and HBO. Also, during the 2013 NFL season, he contributes weekly to Showtime’s *Inside the NFL*. He records player and coach wirings as well as fishpole bench sound. He also mixed on a documentary called *Mission to October* for Major League Baseball Productions.

**Michael Colomby** CAS and **Rich Weingart** CAS are close to wrapping up *Rizzoli & Isles* Season 4 for TNT, and are well into *Nashville* Season 2 for ABC. Next up is *Those Who Kill* for Fox 21/A&E. Other recent projects include *Murder in the First*, a pilot for Steven Bochco/TNT and a pilot for HBO.

**Fred Ginsburg** CAS was recently named as the Manufacturer’s Representative for Rock N Roller equipment carts, covering the film/video industry for the entire USA. Fred was instrumental in helping Rock N Roller President Gary Dahl develop a production cart with a two-tiered shelf system and all-terrain tires. This coming semester, professor Ginsburg will be teaching production sound both at California State University Northridge as well as at Chapman University. Recently, Fred mixed production as well as some of the post-production sound on a series of videos produced on behalf of the NRA/BSA Youth Shooting Sports programs.

**Dick Hansen** CAS is up in the wilds of Oregon working on *Wild*, starring Reese Witherspoon. It is the true story of a woman who walked 1,100 miles alone on the Pacific Crest Trail. I am mixing the entire show out of a bag. Including earwigs and multi-track live music recording and playback. Glen Young is along for the hike and doing a great job. The director is Jean-Marc Vallee who I did *Dallas Buyers Club* with.
The sound crew for a Dolby-sponsored mix at the Banff Centre for the Arts, in conjunction with the Mountain Film Festival. From left: Andrew Lenius/Camille Bruni (work study editors), Gavin Fernandes, CAS, Theresa Leonard (program director), Skip Armstrong (adventure filmmaker), Woody MacPhail (festival director), and John Loose (Dolby).

DraCrewLa (Mate Gabor, Tamas Csaba, CAS and Tuska Milan) send their regards from Budapest after completing Season 1 of the new NBC series Dracula.

Halloween on the Season 5 set of Community: Utility Nathan Pata, boom Rob ‘Spock’ Scott, and ‘Captain’ Stacy Hill, CAS going where no sound team has gone before—well, maybe others have but we thought this was appropriate.

Steve and Karol Urban, CAS celebrated 11 years of marriage on November 10 and more than 15 years of sharing mixes. Here we were caught by our director’s camera making faces at one another at the conclusion of the dub for the feature drama Lost on Purpose, starring James Lafferty and Jane Kaczmarek.

Elanor Rimassa keeping those rechargeables up on SpongeBob SquarePants 2 at Tybee Island, GA. (Submitted by Jonathan Gaynor, CAS)

Mark Ulano, CAS on the roof of the Frank Geary building overlooking the Brandenberg Gate and the Reichstag.

Daniel McCoy, CAS, Jim Tanenbaum, CAS and Frank Scibella prepping kits for a new Henson Company/Syfy show about creature design. Airing spring 2014.
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