



the official quarterly of the cinema audio society



THE
SOUNDING BOARD
a Cinema Audio Society & Motion Picture Sound Editors event



CAS • QUARTERLY

WINTER
2025



When Mentoring Comes Full Circle • A Mixer's Perspective: A Boom, LAV Story!
My Evolution in Documentary Sound • Getting Out of Your Comfort Zone
Music Rebalancing Software Shootout • Events Wrap-Up

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION
IN ALL CATEGORIES INCLUDING

**BEST
PICTURE**

**OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENT
IN SOUND MIXING**
MOTION PICTURES
LIVE ACTION



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ON EVERY SINGLE LEVEL."**

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Members check in



"Hands Down, The Best Picture Of The Year"

The Curvy Critic

"A Loving Attention To Detail In Sound Design"

AV Club



CONCLAVE

For Your Consideration in all Categories Including

BEST PICTURE BEST SOUND

Valentino Giannì - Production Sound Mixer • Ben Baird, CAS - Re-Recording Mixer
Jack Wensley - Supervising Dialogue Editor • Jamie McPhee - Supervising Sound Effects Editor
Rob Price - Foley and FX Re-Recording Mixer

FILMNATION

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PRODUCTIONS

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and more. For more on this film, go to FocusFeaturesGuilds2024.com.



FOCUS
FEATURES



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.

WINTER 2025

CAS NEW MEMBERS

Active

Anna Wilborn CAS
David Tichauer CAS
Ethan Beigel CAS
Jacob A. Cook CAS
Kristian Knoop CAS
Mark Noda CAS
Paul Hackner CAS
Shawn Kirkby CAS
TJ Dumser CAS

Associate

Antionette Tomlinson
Edward Thomson
Evan Sherer
Jeffrey Dolley
Jonathan Ayala Colon
Matt Thompson
Rayne Beckman
Robert Kellough
Stanley Ng

Academic

Chris Stucker
Sam Koabel
Trevor Rockwood

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Greetings to our members from across the United States and the world. The CAS is working hard to expand our geographical outreach, with events in New Mexico and Vancouver, and now in Atlanta and the Netherlands! Please see this issue's "Events Wrap-Up" and the CAS website for more on those gatherings. Of course, we still have events in Los Angeles, like the hugely successful Sounding Board v4.0, produced with the Motion Picture Sound Editors

and hosted by the USC Film School. We were fortunate to have a large number of members of both organizations in attendance, as well as USC film students. The panels were fantastic and will be available on our YouTube channel and website shortly. There will also be links to video from some of our other events, and a recording of the NIFF "Professionals Talk" from Utrecht with Antoin Cox CAS and myself. I enjoyed meeting so many members at these events, as well as hearing great discussions on the many topics that concern all of us.

You should have seen the announcements for the annual membership meeting taking place on Saturday, December 14, at the Arts District Brewing Company in Los Angeles. I look forward to seeing you there, don't forget to RSVP! Also, if you have ideas for future gatherings where you live or work, please let us know as we are already planning for next year's activities. Ranging from screenings and talks to just a great social occasion, we're excited to hear what you would like to be involved with in your area!

Coming up soon are also our 2025 CAS Board of Directors elections. The nomination ballot opens December 17. All active members in good standing as of October 1, 2024, are eligible to run for director positions. Each potential candidate needs two nominations to run (which can include nominating yourself). If you are interested, speak to your colleagues before nomination ballots are due. We need your ideas and participation to keep the CAS growing in new and exciting directions.

I won't go on about this issue of the *CAS Quarterly* except to share my excitement about our newly announced Filmmaker Award recipient selection, Denis Villeneuve. We have previously announced our Career Achievement recipient, Tod A. Maitland CAS. It will be a pleasure to see them celebrated during our 61st CAS Awards at the Beverly Hilton on February 22, 2025. Both have excellent bodies of work, and we can look forward to watching clips and hearing from many special guests—this looks to be a fun evening!

I hope to see many of my fellow CAS members at the awards show and other upcoming events. Meanwhile, wishing you a great holiday season!

Peter F. Kurland CAS

FROM THE EDITOR



While the holidays often bring lots of events, the CAS has had lots of events as well. The Sounding Board v4.0, which took place in October, was a great success and we provide some coverage in this issue courtesy of Kurt Kassulke CAS and CAS Associate Kevin Khor—with even

more coverage coming next issue. Joe Foglia CAS is a great production mixer and a great guy who has an even greater last name (no relation and definitely not biased). In the article “When Mentoring Comes Full Circle,” Anna Wilborn CAS shares the story of mentor Joe and intern Brent Findley in this story of when professional paths cross again. In “My Evolution in Documentary Sound,” re-recording mixer Keith Hodne CAS discusses his personal path from mixing straightforward docs to critically-acclaimed major docuseries. Ever wonder what happens to your sound roll once it leaves set? In “A Mixer’s Perspective: A Boom, LAV Story!” Michael Wynne CAS speaks with those who interact with the production tracks from the PSM to the picture editor to the dialogue editor to the re-recording mixer. If you find yourself losing some mixing motivation, see how some of our CAS colleagues approach this in “Getting Out of Your Comfort Zone,” from CAS Associate Sam Casas. Also in this issue, David Bondelevitch CAS MPSE test drives a few music separation programs to see if they can bring life to some compromised recordings in his “Music Rebalancing Software Shootout” article. Finally, be sure to check out the “Been There Done That” and “The Lighter Side” sections, where you can read about the happenings of our CAS colleagues.

Thank you for taking the time to explore this issue. If an article makes you think of a friend or colleague, send a link to the online version of the *Quarterly*, available on the CAS website. Have something to share? We’d love to hear from you! Email us at CASQuarterly@CinemaAudioSociety.org.

Wishing you and yours a happy holiday season and a prosperous 2025!

Matt Foglia CAS



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“THE ‘DEADPOOL & WOLVERINE’
SOUND DESIGNERS FOUND THE RHYTHMICAL,
LYRICAL PACE OF COMEDY,
TYING THE SOUND EFFECTS TO THE MUSIC INSTEAD OF THE ACTION ON SCREEN.”

GOLDDERBY



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The Seattle Times

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SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR

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SOUND MIXER

Colin Nicolson



MARVEL STUDIOS

**DEADPOOL
& WOLVERINE**

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Streaming **Disney+**

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SOUND AND PRODUCTION DESIGN ARE
WORTHY
OF MAJOR CONSIDERATION”

CLAYTON DAVIS, **VARIETY**

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BEST SOUND

WILL FILES

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SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR

PAUL PIROLA

SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR

ANDY NELSON

RE-RECORDING MIXER

LUKE SCHWARZWELLER

RE-RECORDING MIXER

GREG P. RUSSELL

RE-RECORDING MIXER

TOM MARKS

RE-RECORDING MIXER

GUNTIS SICS

PRODUCTION SOUND MIXER

BETTER MAN





COLLABORATORS

David Bondelevitch CAS MPSE

is a re-recording mixer and educator who has won two Emmy Awards and two MPSE Golden Reel Awards (and has been nominated 22 times). He is Past President and Board member of the Motion Picture Sound Editors. David was the Secretary of the Cinema Audio Society 2012-2019, Vice President 2007-2011, and has been on the Board of Directors since 2006. He has been writing for the *CAS Quarterly* magazine since 2006 and was co-editor in 2007.

His most recent projects include mixing the documentary *Empty Net*, about the US Paralympics sled hockey team that aired on *NBC Sports*. He also mixed the documentary *Southwest of Salem*, which won a Peabody Award. He also mixed the cult comedy *Jimmy Vestwood: Amerikan Hero*, starring Persian-American comedian Maz Jobrani.

David is an associate professor at CU Denver, where he teaches recording arts. David received his MFA in cinema production from USC and also holds a bachelor of music in jazz composition from the Berklee College of Music in Boston.



Keith Hodne CAS

began his career DJ'ing some of New York City's most iconic nightclubs. His love for sound and music led him to his 20-plus year career as a supervising sound editor and re-recording mixer. To date, Keith has worked on some of the decade's most critically acclaimed documentaries, including *O.J.: Made in America*, *The Last Dance, Sr.*, and *100 Foot Wave*. *O.J.: Made in America* took home many prestigious awards, including the Academy Award for Best Documentary, and Keith received a Primetime Emmy nomination for Outstanding Sound Mixing for a nonfiction program and a CAS Award nomination for Outstanding Sound Mixing for his work. In 2021, Keith was nominated for two MPSE Golden Reel Awards in the Outstanding Achievement in Sound Editing category for Netflix's *The Last Dance* and *High Score*. Most recently, Keith received his second Primetime Emmy nomination and first CAS Award win for HBO's *100 Foot Wave* Season 2. In addition to sound, Keith loves shooting Canon DSLR, has an extensive 12-inch vinyl collection, along with a "healthy" sneaker obsession.

CAS Associate Kevin Punsalan Khor



is an L.A.-based dialogue editor. Having grown up in Singapore, his curiosity for film ultimately brought him to Los Angeles where,

over the past three years since starting his professional career, he has worked on feature films from Hollywood to Bollywood. His most recent accolade is his work on *Jawan*, one of the highest-grossing Indian films of all time. Another project of his, *Max Dagan*, was featured at Dancing With Films this year. Kevin has had the pleasure of working alongside amazing mentors who have supported his growth over the past few years, and he is always keen to learn new approaches and technologies. In addition to sound editing, Kevin enjoys picking up production gigs to satisfy his desire to be on set and interact with other filmmakers.



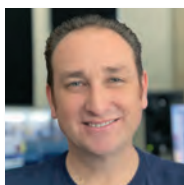
Anna Wilborn CAS

is a Southern California native, USC graduate, and certified set-brat having grown up watching her dad roll sound on his trusty Nagra. She began her career in post-production sound, joining the Editors Guild in 1998 and worked on features and television at Sony and Warner Bros. But in 2005, the production bug bit hard. She ran to the old familiarity of the film set and never looked back. Twenty-six years later, she is now a proud new member of the Cinema Audio Society. Spare time shenanigans include a growing guitar collection, raising her two daughters, and last-minute road trips. Oh, and showing her dad all the crazy new sound gadgets and watching him shake his head.



Michael Wynne CAS

is an Emmy-nominated production sound mixer whose credits include series such as *Tell Me Lies*, *Genius*, *Atlanta*, and *P-Valley*, along with films such as *Avengers: Infinity Wars* and *Black Panther*. Michael enjoys sharing his knowledge of production sound with others, as can be seen on his website blog (at MichaelWynne.net) and his YouTube channel (@MichaelWynneCAS), which includes gear reviews, common professional workflow tutorials, and trending topics surrounding the business of working in production.



CAS Associate Sam Casas

has been working as a re-recording mixer and sound designer at Lime Studios in Santa Monica since 2003. He has found a successful niche mixing TV

commercials for global and national brands such as Adidas, Visa, QuickBooks, and Postmates, to name a few. In addition to his commercial work at Lime Studios, he finds time to mix the occasional independent feature such as *Lupe* for HBO Max, various shorts, and music videos for artists such as H.E.R. and French Montana.

Joining MPEG in 2017, and then MPSE and CAS in 2018 as an Associate member, Sam has a passion for acquiring and sharing knowledge. With a love of film and episodic television, the CAS has been a great inspiration in his goal to bring a cinematic approach to all his work. Connecting with other members while writing articles for the *CAS Quarterly* has been especially educational and rewarding.

Sam has a fully equipped and treated 5.1 studio at his home in Studio City, CA, which he has been able to make his primary workplace since the start of the pandemic in 2020. In his spare time, he enjoys reading books about acoustics, thinking about maybe starting to exercise again, and spending time with his wife Elise and son Sebastian.



Kurt Kassulke CAS is a longtime effects re-recording mixer with an Emmy for *Ally McBeal* and diverse credits ranging back to *The X-Files*, *The Practice*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *NYPD*

Blue, *Castle*, *Under the Dome*, *The Vampire Diaries*, and *Hawaii 5-0*. Kurt's most recent work can be heard on *Grey's Anatomy*, *Project Blue Book*, *Big Sky*, and more!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

61ST | AWARDS TIMELINE

The Cinema Audio Society has set its timeline for the **61st Annual CAS Awards**, which will take place on **Saturday, February 22, 2025**.

Every year, the CAS Awards recognize Outstanding Sound Mixing in film and television, along with an annual Student Recognition Award. Career Achievement Award recipient Tod A. Maitland CAS and Filmmaker Award recipient Denis Villeneuve will also be honored.

"Sound plays an integral and often under-recognized part in the way we view and consume today's media," said CAS President Peter Kurland. "We take great pride in celebrating outstanding sound and look forward to honoring the mixers involved with the outstanding projects of 2024 at the 61st CAS Awards. I hope to see you all there!"

- The entry submission form is available on the CAS website at: www.cinemaudiosociety.org.
- Entry Submissions due Online – 5 p.m. PT, Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2024
- Nomination Ballot Voting Begins Online – Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024
- Nomination Ballot Voting Ends Online – 5 p.m. PT, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2025
- Final Nominees in each category announced – Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2025
- Nominee listing error and omission deadline – Friday, Jan. 17, 2025
- Final Voting Begins Online – Thursday, Jan. 30, 2025
- Final Voting Ends Online – 5 p.m. PT, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2025
- 61st Annual CAS Awards – Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025
- To learn more about the awards, visit: <https://cinemaudiosociety.org/cas-awards/>

New CAS "In Conversation" Podcasts Available!

"In Conversation," Episode 15 | Re-recording mixer Anna Behlmer CAS has been honored with 10 Oscar nominations and 12 CAS Award nominations in addition to being the 2018 CAS Career Achievement recipient. Through her experiences mixing on such films as *Braveheart*, *L.A. Confidential*, *Evita*, *Moulin Rouge!*, *Blood Diamond*, and *Star Trek*, she brings an in-depth approach to mixing sound effects to the discussion. Interviewed by Joshua Anderson CAS.

All episodes are available here: <https://cinemaudiosociety.org/podcasts/>

CAS YouTube Channel



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TRUE DETECTIVE: NIGHT COUNTRY



HACKS



HOUSE OF THE DRAGON



THE REGIME



THE FRANCHISE



THE JINX - PART TWO



INDUSTRY



THE COMMANDANT'S SHADOW



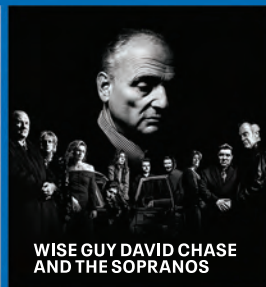
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IT'S FLORIDA, MAN



WISE GUY DAVID CHASE
AND THE SOPRANOS



THE SEX LIVES
OF COLLEGE GIRLS



DUNE: PROPHECY



TOKYO VICE



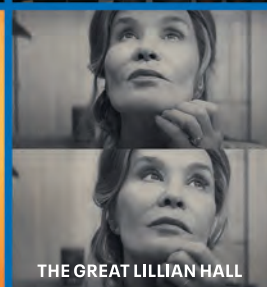
REN FAIRE



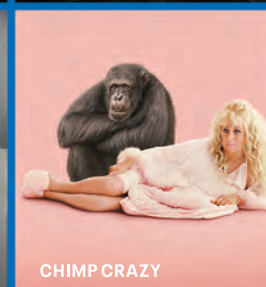
LAST WEEK TONIGHT
WITH JOHN OLIVER



STAX: SOULSVILLE U.S.A.



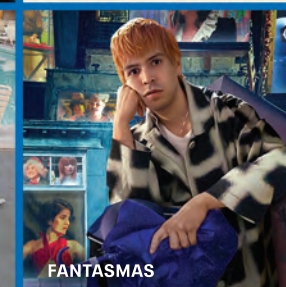
THE GREAT LILLIAN HALL



CHIMP CRAZY



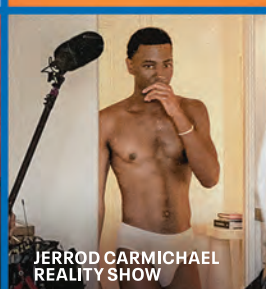
FAYE



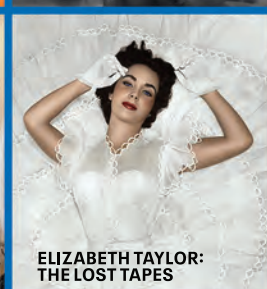
FANTASMAS



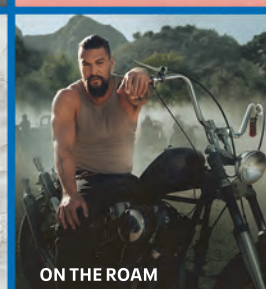
THE SYMPATHIZER



JERROD CARMICHAEL
REALITY SHOW



ELIZABETH TAYLOR:
THE LOST TAPES



ON THE ROOM



CONAN O'BRIEN MUST GO



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CHROMATICA BALL

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THREE WOMEN

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The end of 2024 is here and what a difficult year it has been for so many of us in production and post-production. We hope that most of you have been able to weather these hard times as we all are expecting work to come back with the new year as production seems to be ramping up.

EIPMA has continued to progress with the incredible support of our member organizations. As you know, EIPMA is a charitable nonprofit organization and is completely

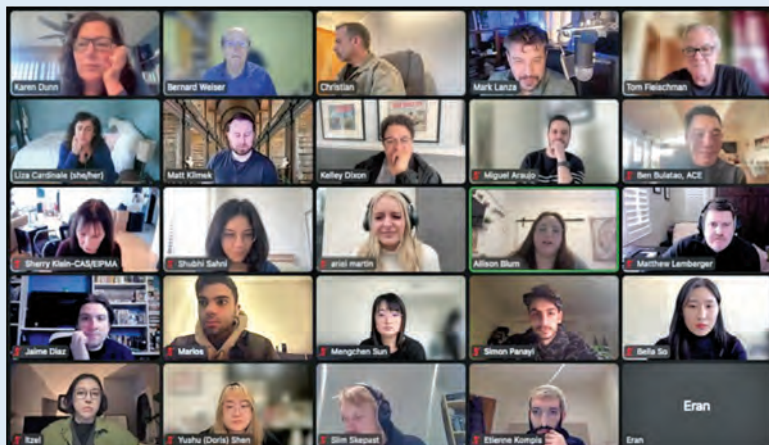
reliant on donations. All of us at EIPMA are volunteers, so our costs are low. We are so grateful for donations from the Cinema Audio Society and the Motion Picture Sound Editors, along with sponsor donations from our events. EIPMA wishes to give our heartfelt thanks to you all. Of course, we also accept small individual donations through our website eipma.org. Every dollar is so appreciated.

We are proud to note that we have started our One-on-One Mentoring

Program. Our participation at the city of Burbank's 1st Media Expo and Job Fair with a panel discussion and information table was a big success with 3,500 attendees, and started an inflow of requests for this program showing the important need for the help and mentorship we provide.

A few of the ways the CAS has worked with Entertainment Industry Professionals Mentoring Alliance this year include:

2024 Speed Mentoring for MPSE, CAS, ACE Student Awards



On February 24, 2024, we held our 2024 Speed Mentoring for MPSE, CAS, ACE Student Awards. The student nominees from MPSE, CAS, and ACE participated online for one-on-one talks with veteran professionals.

Role Models: Women in the Entertainment Industry & How They Got There

November 9, 2024, Avid Technology's offices in Burbank. Sponsored by the CAS, MPSE, Avid, and NBCUniversal Studio Post, this was an inspiring panel discussion featuring accomplished women leaders in the entertainment industry: director Linda Mendoza (*Ugly Betty*, *Scrubs*), production mixer Lisa Pinero CAS (*Red One*, *Challengers*, *Licorice Pizza*), picture editor Sabrina Plisco ACE (*Doctor Strange*, *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*), and producer/director Avril Z. Speaks (*Files of the Unexplained*, *Jinn*). These talented women shared their insights about their individual paths to overcoming the challenge of unconscious bias in an industry that had been long occupied by men. A recording of the webinar is posted on our EIPMA YouTube channel. Please check it out!



October 20, 2024, at the University of Southern California, CAS & MPSE presented The Sounding Board v4.0—a series of panel discussions about the practical, creative, and technical art of sound for picture.

As a fantastic show of support, CAS & MPSE donated the proceeds from this event to EIPMA! EIPMA is so grateful and wish to extend to these organizations a THANK YOU to your Board of Directors and members.



L-R: David Barber MPSE, Peter Kurland CAS, and Mark Lanza MPSE



Events Wrap-Up



Day at the Ranch

The MPTF/IATSE fundraiser, Day at the Ranch, was held on Sunday, November 10, at Calamigos Ranch in Malibu, CA. Attendees enjoyed a great lunch buffet, auction, raffle, lots of fun outdoor activities, and much more! Some of the activities included paddleboat rides, carousel rides, an obstacle course, and the dual axe throwing challenge—which was sponsored by the CAS! Support helps workers currently facing life's challenges and enables MPTF to continue helping industry workers in times of need, including financial assistance, subsidized childcare, and caring for aging parents.

Netherlands Film Festival

On September 22, CAS President **Peter Kurland** was in Utrecht, Netherlands, with **Antoin Cox CAS** speaking at the Netherlands Film Festival in collaboration with the Dutch Film Sound Association as part of the festival's "Professionals Talk" series. Along with discussions on the various aspects of set sound and his career, Peter provided information about what the CAS does and the value of membership. While there, Peter also took the opportunity to meet with local CAS members for dinner. A podcast of the discussion will be uploaded; we'll keep you posted.



Baby Driver Mixer, Panel, and Screening

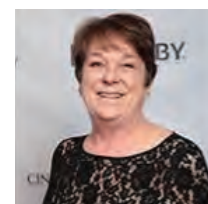
On Saturday, September 29, CAS members and guests, along with members of the Local 479 sound community, gathered at The Springs Cinema & Taphouse in Atlanta, Georgia, for fellowship, discussion, and a viewing of Edgar Wright's *Baby Driver*. This was Atlanta's first in-person CAS event and

began with drinks and appetizers, along with a raffle for two tickets to the 61st CAS Awards. We were thrilled when **Steve Gonzalez CAS** had his name called as he has been an enthusiastic volunteer throughout the years! Following the socializing, attendees were able to hear stories about capturing the production

sound for the film. Moderated by production sound mixer **Whit Norris CAS**, the panel included *Baby Driver*'s production sound mixer, **Mary Ellis CAS**, who was nominated for an Academy Award for her work on the film. Mary shared a wealth of experience about her team's process, with a focus on preparation, interdepartmental communication, and technical innovation. Joining Mary on the panel were playback/Pro Tools operator Alex Lowe, boom operator James Peterson, and sound utility Thomas Doolittle. After the very insightful discussion, the afternoon culminated with a viewing of *Baby Driver* in 4K and Atmos!



Whit Norris CAS,
moderator & production
sound mixer



Mary Ellis CAS,
production sound mixer



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In All Categories Including

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BEST SOUND

TED CAPLAN, SUPERVISING MUSIC EDITOR

TOD A. MAITLAND, CAS, SOUND MIXER

PAUL MASSEY, RE-RECORDING MIXER

DAVID GIAMMARCO, RE-RECORDING MIXER

DONALD SYLVESTER, SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR

SEARCHLIGHT
PICTURES

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A FILM BY **JAMES MANGOLD**

A COMPLETE UNKNOWN

SCREENPLAY BY **JAMES MANGOLD AND JAY COCKS** DIRECTED BY **JAMES MANGOLD**

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LOGIN WITH YOUR PERSONAL ACCESS CODE

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Events Wrap-Up



TRON: Legacy Mixer, Panel, and Screening

On Saturday, August 24, CAS members and guests gathered midafternoon at The Parlor in Vancouver for drinks, appetizers, and prizes! The chatty crowd enjoyed dissecting the current state of the industry and lamenting the latest equipment trends over finger food and pizzas.

As the day moved to early evening, the event relocated to the Vancouver International Film Festival Centre where the lobby mingling led into the well-attended panel titled TALKING TRON!

The lively panel, which included members of the sound team from both *TRON: Legacy* and the upcoming *TRON: Ares*, was moderated by **Kyle Petty CAS**, Chair IATSE Local 891 Sound Department, and CAS Events Committee member. Kyle talked with production sound mixer Michael McGee and boom operator Don Brown as they recalled tales of set triumphs and challenges from 2010. Joining them was *TRON: Ares* production sound mixer Mark Noda, who was able to bring a current slant to the *TRON* set. Attendees were then able to experience director Joseph Kosinski's *TRON: Legacy* in the city where it was shot and in the way it was intended—on the big screen!

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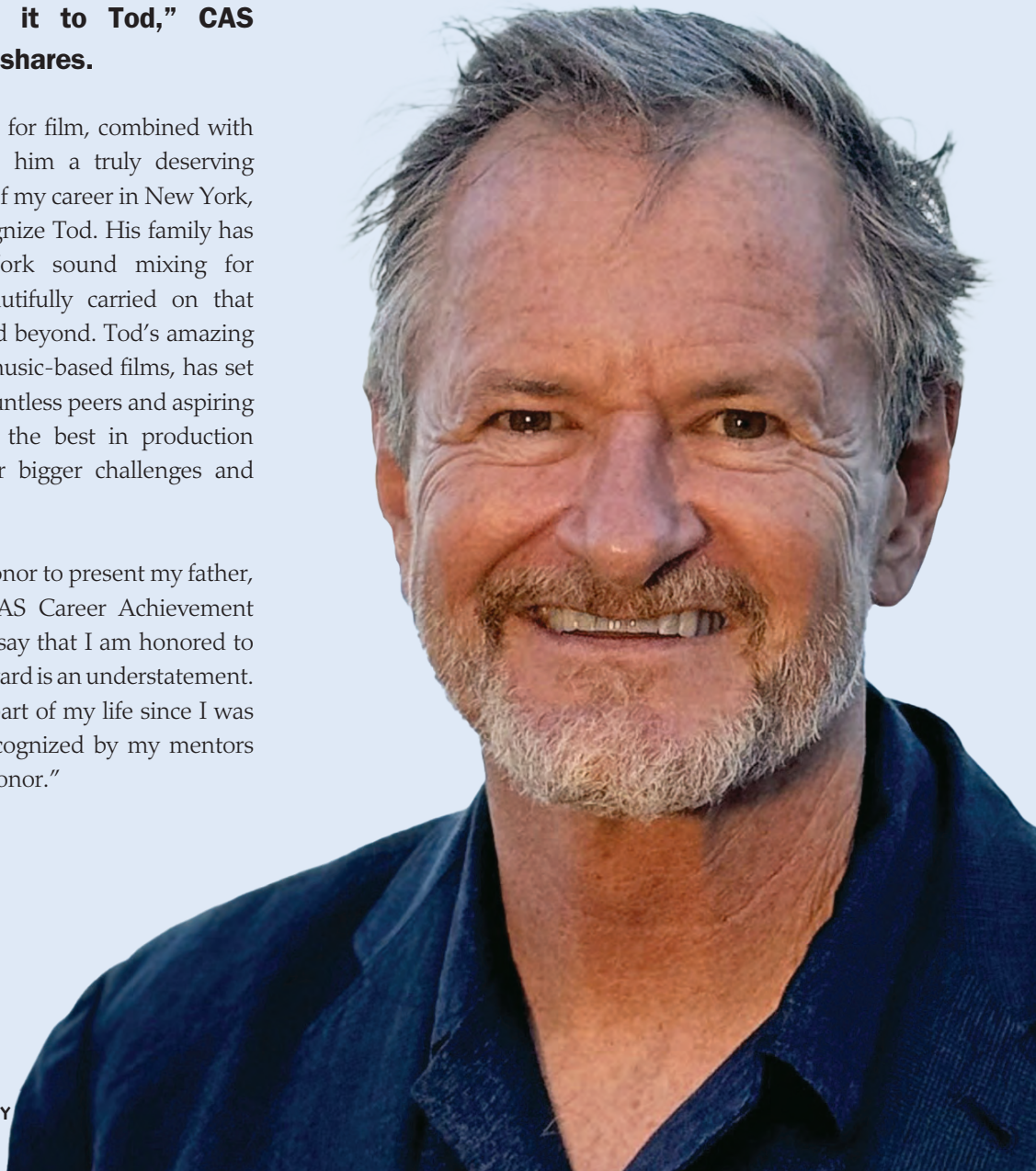
2025 CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT PRODUCTION SOUND MIXER TOD A. MAITLAND CAS

The Cinema Audio Society is proud to announce that it will honor award-winning production sound mixer Tod A. Maitland CAS with its esteemed 2025 Career Achievement Award. “The Career Achievement Award remains the Society’s highest honor, and we are thrilled to present it to Tod,” CAS President Peter Kurland shares.

“His love for and deep respect for film, combined with his impeccable artistry, make him a truly deserving recipient. Having spent much of my career in New York, I am especially excited to recognize Tod. His family has been prominent in New York sound mixing for generations, and he has beautifully carried on that tradition both in New York and beyond. Tod’s amazing work, especially in sound for music-based films, has set new standards and inspired countless peers and aspiring mixers. His work exemplifies the best in production sound mixing, taking on ever bigger challenges and creating outstanding sound.”

“Sixteen years ago, I had the honor to present my father, Dennis Maitland, with the CAS Career Achievement Award,” recalls Maitland. “To say that I am honored to receive this same prestigious award is an understatement. The film business has been a part of my life since I was in diapers, and now, to be recognized by my mentors and peers, there is no higher honor.”

Tod A. Maitland is a five-time Academy Award-nominated, Emmy-nominated, BAFTA-winning sound mixer with more than 100 feature film credits. His impressive portfolio spans classics like *Tootsie* to modern masterpieces such as *West Side Story*, *JFK*, *Seabiscuit*, *I Am Legend*, *The Irishman*, *Joker*,



the TV series *Fallout*, for which he was recently nominated for an Emmy, and the upcoming Bob Dylan film, *A Complete Unknown*. Always at the cutting edge of technology, Tod has established himself as a pioneer in capturing sound for modern movie musicals. His journey began with *The Doors*, directed by Oliver Stone, igniting a 30-year commitment to enhancing production sound for musicals—improving sound quality, efficiency, and technology. To date, he has worked on 15 music-based films.

Beyond production sound, Tod collaborated with Wylie Stateman and Lon Bender to create The Hollywood Edge Sound Libraries. He also serves as Head of Sound at NYU Tisch Grad Film School. An esteemed speaker, Tod delivered the commencement address at his alma mater and currently consults for Shure Microphones among other ventures. Tod splits his time with his family between NYC and the Catskills, where his hobbies include spending time with friends, writing, inventing, and building things.

We look forward to celebrating Tod's career at the 61st Annual CAS Awards on Saturday, February 22, 2025.



West Side Story



THE CAS FILMMAKER AWARD RECIPIENT: **Trailblazing Filmmaker** **DENIS VILLENEUVE**

Acclaimed director Denis Villeneuve will receive the Cinema Audio Society's Filmmaker of the Year Award at the 61st CAS Awards on Saturday, February 22, 2025, at The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California.

"Denis Villeneuve is a trailblazer in the world of cinema, and it is with great excitement that we honor him with the 2025 CAS Filmmaker Award," said CAS President Peter Kurland. "Villeneuve has an exceptional ability to intertwine storytelling, sound and visuals, crafting immersive experiences that linger in the minds of audiences long after the final frame. We celebrate his remarkable contributions to film, as he continuously challenges the status quo and redefines what is possible in storytelling."

Villeneuve is an Academy Award®-nominated French-Canadian filmmaker whose astute attention to detail and unique visuals have established him as one of the premier directors working today. *Dune: Part Two*, the monumental continuation of *Dune: Part One*, and conclusion of Frank Herbert's novel *Dune*, was released to critical acclaim earlier this year.

"I am truly honored to receive the CAS Filmmaker Award. This is especially meaningful to me because sound has always been at the core of my storytelling. It's a powerful tool of expression that keeps fascinating me. It's what makes us experience moving images through common wavelengths," commented honoree Denis Villeneuve. "Furthermore, the immersive power of cinematic sound design and sound dubbing is truly unparalleled when it comes to the theatrical experience. I have been fortunate to work with masters throughout my journey in Hollywood. I am fully aware that I owe them tremendously. I look forward to celebrating the art of sound with all the artists who contribute to its evolution and success."



Dune: Part One, which began Villeneuve's adaptation of Frank Herbert's celebrated science fiction novel, premiered in October 2021. It garnered six Academy Awards, multiple nominations from the Critics' Choice Awards, Producers Guild, Directors Guild, Writers Guild, and BAFTA, and was recognized by AFI and NBR for Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Adapted Screenplay.

Villeneuve's impressive filmography includes acclaimed titles such as *Blade Runner 2049*, *Arrival*, *Sicario*, *Prisoners*, *Enemy*, and *Incendies*. His ability to blend intricate narratives with cutting-edge technology has set a new standard for cinematic storytelling.

This marks the 20th year that the Cinema Audio Society has honored a distinguished filmmaker with this award. Denis Villeneuve will join past recipients, including industry luminaries such as J.J. Abrams, Alejandro González Iñárritu, George Clooney, Steven Spielberg, and Quentin Tarantino.



Timothee Chalamet in
Dune: Part One

When Mentoring Comes Full Circle

by Anna Wilborn CAS

Mentoring the next generation is a core building block of the human experience. It's as old as civilization itself. The word "Mentor" comes from ancient Greece, originating in Homer's *The Odyssey*. Odysseus left his son under the care of a guardian named Mentor, whose job it was to protect and guide him. Sharing our knowledge is fundamental to society, as it advances growth and innovation. In the film world, we know this all too well. The best way to learn our craft isn't typically in a classroom, it's by immersing yourself in the work on set or on the mixing stage. Our world is far too fast, nuanced, and detailed to not have others show you the way.



Joe Foglia CAS has always been an advocate for sound mentorship. I think this is what separates those who have a true passion versus those who just have a job. When you sincerely love your work, you want to share it with others. In continuing the history of internships at his company Southeast Audio Services, Joe wanted to invite an intern to the *Scrubs* Season 6 sound department, comprised of himself as production sound mixer, former SEAS intern **Kevin Santy** on boom, and myself as utility. This was in 2006, well before Local 695 had a formal trainee program, so there was some serious leg work to be done, being that this was a rather unusual request. Interns usually went to production offices, or *maybe* post (that is how I got my start). But dropped into the chaos of a film set? Never. Insurance was one problem. Getting this officially approved by ABC and producers was another.

L-R: Brent Findley, Anna Wilborn, Kevin Santy, Joe Foglia, and Tucker Rose in 2006.



Joe Foglia, Anna Wilborn, and Kevin Santy in 2006



L-R: Steve Blazwick, Gary Raymond, Becca Borawski, Joe Foglia, Kevin Santy, Anna Wilborn, and Brent Findley

Joe brought his idea to Bill Lawrence, creator of *Scrubs* and Doozer Productions. It wasn't easy, but with Bill's blessing, and producers Randall Winston and Liz Newman's persistence, the higher-ups at ABC finally acquiesced. Being a Floridian himself, Joe wanted to pull someone from Full Sail University, an audio and film school in Winter Park, Florida. Kevin Santy happened to be in their very first graduating class. Joe contacted Sherri Tantleff, head of Student Outreach, who was thrilled with the opportunity for her students and helped assure the producers and ABC that Full Sail would handle all the insurance requirements.

Approval in hand, it was time to select a student. Sherri sent Joe a stack of resumes from all those who were interested. And it was a lot. From the pile, he carefully chose three candidates and phoned them up for interviews. Though he'd originally set out to bring in a production sound major, the clear winner was a not-so-young man named **Brent Findley**. 32 years old, married, and a native of Michigan; not your typical intern. Brent was dead set on a career in post-production sound after falling in love with it at Full Sail. I asked Joe why he went that route. "After the phone calls, it wasn't even close. Brent had by far the most enthusiasm out of the three. He was willing to drop everything to come out to California and make it happen." Not surprisingly, Brent was already a student member of the Cinema Audio Society and the Motion Picture Sound Editors, having learned about both organizations at Full Sail, sharing, "I immediately realized they were a great way for someone just starting out to gain exposure to people and ideas well beyond what I could find in Florida." As we know, this is

exactly the kind of drive it takes to make it in this business, and it wouldn't be long before Brent was a full-fledged member of both associations.

Joe wasn't a stranger to post sound either. He had built a small Pro Tools-based ADR studio in the basement of the abandoned hospital in Sherman Oaks where we shot *Scrubs*. It was there we recorded Zach Braff's iconic voice-over that narrated the entire series. Not to mention, our entire film editorial team was also on site (with a smart, young post PA named Kip Kroeger, whom we'll get to in just a bit). Plus, I had just come out of seven years in post-production myself with a decent depth of knowledge to share with our newbie. We had a totally self-contained mini-production studio in that funky old hospital. From writers' rooms, to production offices, film sets, editing suites, actors' dressing rooms, costume shop, a mill, even doggy day care, we churned out one the best TV shows of the early 2000's. This was an unprecedented opportunity for Brent to learn about the entire process. We were all excited.

Brent fast-tracked the plans he and his wife Kelly had to one day move out to California. "One day" was now next week! Thankfully, a friend in Los Angeles had a couch to lend while Kelly tied up loose ends back in Florida. Brent was well aware that this was the chance of a lifetime. "I had an opportunity to learn this business under the wings of professionals, in an internship capacity, with no expectation other than to be a good person with a great work ethic, because I really had nothing else to bring!" I have to say that is not entirely true. Brent also had a four-year computer science degree and a

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previous career in I.T., so his technical chops were already well established.

For six weeks, Brent absorbed everything he could. From which way a 9V goes in the Comtek (I'll never forget, he somehow got that bugger in there backward AND managed to get the door closed), to how a boom op knows exactly where the frame line is just by knowing the lens size. He recalls some pivotal moments that have stuck with him to this day. "I remember an electrician was pushing a huge light that got stuck. Instinctively, I went to help him, but he stopped me cold saying, 'Not your department.' That was a learning moment. Now, as a supervisor, I know everyone has a role that needs to be protected."

Brent was also impressed with Joe's organizational skills. Every cable, tweaker, and sound doohickey had a home that was labeled and easy to find. Coming from a school that was organized like a tornado-strewn neighborhood yard sale, he was stunned to realize it didn't have to be that way. Brent says his days with us were invaluable for his future career in post sound. He received firsthand, working knowledge of how the

sound gets from us to him. He understands the issues the sound department are up against, the problems we have to solve, and now—thanks to me—he also knows the catering culinary splendor that is ... huevos rancheros! (Again, he's from Michigan.)

Through incessant badgering (his words), Brent was able to land yet another internship at a post house in Culver City called Sonic Magic. There, he kept the coffee hot and the sodas cold. In between those massively important duties (I'm serious. It's post. It requires a steady diet of coffee and cola), he would watch the dubbing sessions and shadow the editors. Eventually, he was given some Foley to cut, and his career was officially on track. He kept in touch with Kip Kroeger, who was helping produce the actors' and writers' short films which we shot on the weekends. They needed post sound, and Brent was happy to build his resume while garnering that much needed experience, as well as the hours to join the Editors Guild. He still popped in and out with us too, helping us upgrade the ADR room and eventually run sessions. Anywhere Brent could snag a little more knowledge, he was there. It's that unwavering



L-R: Brent Findley,
Kevin Santy,
and Joe Foglia



L-R: Brent Findley, John Cook, Liz
Newman, Joe Foglia, and Kevin Santy



L-R: Joe Foglia
and Brent Findley

level of dedication to the craft that has skyrocketed Brent's career. He continued along in the Doozer family, eventually supervising a quaint little show called *Ted Lasso*, which gave the world a much needed warm hug with its wit, charm, and of course, fantastic sound. Joe definitely knows how to pick 'em. Seeing the potential in someone and nurturing it is a talent all on its own.

Now, 18 amazing years later, Joe, Brent, and I—all active members of the CAS—are reminiscing over tuna melts and French fries at Patys Restaurant in Toluca Lake. The very same place I first met Joe when he hired me back on *Scrubs*, Season 5. It's all come full circle. I was over at Warner Bros. sound mixing *Shrinking*, Season 2 for Doozer this year, while Joe and Brent spent a good part of 2023/24 collaborating on *Bad Monkey*, Bill Lawrence's latest #1 Apple TV+ series. With their close friendship, they could easily communicate the needs of their respective departments to each other. A prime example is when it became apparent that a recording session with Crystal, the tufted capuchin monkey, was a much needed story element for the show. Kip, now a supervising producer, agreed, trusting the crew he'd worked with for so many years. Joe promptly arranged the session back in Florida.

Brent recalls, "The monkey ADR session was super valuable since very little of the production monkey sounds could be used because of the overlapping trainer prompts. Joe asked Crystal's trainer to emote different sounds, which were then labeled with their corresponding emotion, so back in L.A. we'd know how to properly use them for the monkey's reactions. It

gave us a pallet of clean, well-recorded performances that really gave Bill, Kip, and EP Matt Tarses many more options with how to play Crystal's reactions since we had so little salvaged production audio. Even more amazing, our composers, Jamie and Waz Jackson, used some of those recordings in the end credit music. It's very haunting—and I love it."

I'm on my second iced tea. Old photos and their accompanying ridiculous stories are flying. Joe's pride in his two protégés-turned-friends is evident, as is our appreciation for the incredible opportunities we've been given. Brent helps music recording engineers learn the skills of running an ADR session. The workflow, if you think about it, is rather similar to recording an album. Often, we've been in super remote locations where having on-site ADR or VO was integral to the production schedule. Brent finds local studio engineers and trains them to broaden their career to the film and TV world.

As for myself, I enjoy speaking about production sound at high school and university film programs. I even schlep my gear to Career Day when I can. Recently, I helped troubleshoot my daughter's surprisingly complex public school sound system. Twenty channels of Sennheiser wireless for a junior high cafeteria-by-day, theater-by-night? Lordy. Joe still recruits trainees, now officially sanctioned by our union and a gateway to membership. And if the stars align, I hope to take on a sound trainee for *Shrinking* Season 3. Kip, I hope you're reading this! Let's continue to share our knowledge and pay it forward.



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DREAMWORKS

THE WILD ROBOT

A Mixer's Perspective: A Boom, LAV Story!

by Michael Wynne CAS

Being a child of the '80s and growing up in theaters seeing blockbuster films such as *E.T.*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and *The Empire Strikes Back*, I imagine there were minimal lavalier microphones used in the mix. And since this was decades before I began my sound career as a production mixer, I wouldn't have noticed anyhow. Mix subtleties such as matching perspectives with the right amount of air around the microphone or dialogue intelligibility while balancing the backgrounds, music, and sound effects weren't even a thought. The movie experience was simply taken in with all of my senses, fully immersing me into the story while sitting in front of the big screen.

Fast-forward some 40 years later, I now have the privilege to work in sound as a production mixer and am no stranger to today's modern workflows on set. Multi-camera shows with ambitious shooting schedules, wide-and-tights for coverage, and noisy locations are common. Choosing what you can push for and what you let go of is a balancing act, and you have to learn to roll with the punches. But something I find challenging is when I'm not able to get my boom mics over the actor in a scene for what I believe is necessary coverage, relying on an electret condenser lavalier mic to do what I know doesn't sound as good as it would be on the boom.

In this article, I decided to follow those production sound rolls beyond my perspective as a production mixer and track them on their journey throughout the filmmaking process. To do this, I reached out to a production mixer, picture editor, dialogue editor, and re-recording mixer. What all of these roles have in common is they all work with the dialogue extensively throughout their process. With this in mind, we'll be discussing workflow, mix choices, some of the latest tools, and what each of their goals are for the dialogue mix.

The Production Mixer

I started my conversation with production mixer **Stephen Tibbo CAS** from his studio in L.A. Stephen has had a long and successful career in the film industry and spent 11 of those years working on the hit series *Modern Family* from 2009-2020, during which he received three Primetime Emmy Awards. I began our conversation by asking Stephen about the flow of his process on set and what he hopes to achieve in a production mix.

"I hope to record the performances of the actors on a boom as much as possible. I want their voices to sound natural with presence with whatever mic I choose. I think there is an overreliance on the wires [and] think we've gotten away from just getting a good boom track, and it kind of bums me out."

I also share Stephen's preference for more natural perspectives, however, we also discussed how wires also play a critical role

in a production mix. We talked in great detail about the effectiveness of lavalier mics for noisy environments and unique on-camera actions. Stephen outlined how the production mix plays a critical role for on-set monitoring, dailies, and during the picture edit. Next, I asked Stephen to talk about his workflow with the picture editors for *Modern Family*.

"In Modern Family, the editors typically would use a combination of my mix track for rough cuts and pull from the ISO's when necessary. And for certain set environments, like the Disneyland episode, we used all wires for the mix because of the high-noise shooting environment. So, sometimes it really depends on the location [to decide] what's ideal to use for the production mix."

Stephen Tibbo CAS



It's also my experience that the wires offer better signal-to-noise performance when you're dealing with challenging environments such as a noisy or an overly reverberant environment. Speaking of signal-to-noise, one thing that we both feel is important is getting noise makers turned off on set, and it's something that we both work very hard trying to achieve. This is one of the reasons Stephen prefers to stay in close communication with post throughout principal photography.

"I remember working on the show where there was a transformer on the stage buzzing, which the production

mixers had brought up to production and nothing would get done. It literally took the re-recording mixers to come visit the set to get something done about it. I can't emphasize enough the importance of getting sets quiet to maximize the use of the boom and coordinating closely with post."

The Picture Editor

Next, I decided to reach out to picture editor **Julie Cohen ACE**. I had the pleasure to work with Julie on two seasons of Hulu's new series *Tell Me Lies*. My experience with Julie is she's committed to excellence in her craft and has a strong understanding of the technical and creative process. First, I asked Julie how the mixes are usually completed for the rough cuts and how that works in her typical workflow.

"In episodic, typically it's in the edit that the first mixing happens in the post process. I'm making sure all the elements are audible in a scene. It's my assistant editor who does most of the mix balancing, adds sound effects and other elements, which allows us to work efficiently. This team mix effort is a common workflow amongst editors. Also, sometimes we'll add voice filters or other tools to help match perspectives. And oftentimes I'm using iZotope on the production tracks to help quiet background noise and clean up the dialogue."



Julie Cohen ACE

I was surprised to hear that noise-reduction tools were common in the edit bay for Julie, but considering her delivery goals for a rough cut, it makes sense to me. It certainly speaks to the necessity for everyone involved in the production process to put more momentum toward improving set background noise for dialogue capture. Those who work as production mixers on the front lines understand that the logistics and politics involved are painstaking and often fruitless. In my experience, how quiet and acoustically

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MATTHEW COLLINGE Re-Recording Mixer

STÉPHANE BUCHER, CAS Production Sound Mixer

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GLADIATOR II



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appropriate a set can be is often dictated by the budget. Conversion warehouse stages without soundproofing or acoustic treatment are common. However, oftentimes sound mixers aren't being invited to tech scouts because producers don't want to spend the money. I can't empathize enough how important it is that production mixers push to attend tech scouts! Achieving good signal-to-noise starts on a tech scout, and with some simple common sense planning, a lot can be accomplished. Next, I asked Julie about her process for delivering rough cuts as it pertains to the mix.

"Oftentimes, it's the editor who has to complete the first mix, adding pressure to their delivery expectations and timeline. On an episodic, our timeline is we're usually cutting the series while it's shooting and we're getting up to one to five days to deliver an editor's cut—which is first delivered to the director. Then comes the producers' cuts, and finally the studio and or network. It's going right to the studio untouched by final sound and it can be problematic because we end up with a lot of mix notes."

Not only was Julie and her AE mixing dialogue using the production mix with sub-clipped ISO's feathered in, they were also responsible for adding all the creative elements such as music, sound effects, and sometimes backgrounds. Then I wondered if Julie typically attends the final mix on her projects. Undoubtedly, a final mix would be critical to the flow of the story, with music cues, sound effects, and layered ADR. I asked if she is typically present during the final mixes and if that is common in an editor's workflow.

"I rarely miss the opportunity to sit in on a final mix. It really allows me to bring forth the full collaboration between the re-recording mixer and the creative vision for the project. First and foremost, I'm listening for dialogue clarity, which is number one. [I'm] also making sure that perspectives match, such as on screen playback from a phone or being in a large room. I've sat in sessions where there was a line of ADR missing. It's great to collaborate and catch these things. It's not always possible for me to sit in a mix such as when I'm on another project while it's happening, but I'll do everything I can to attend."

In speaking with Julie, it really reaffirmed how important the production mix is for the picture editor. Once you get past dailies, the production mix's primary use is for this stage of the film making process. Not only should it be the best representation of all the microphones being used in the scene, but also

something that closely aligns with the editor's goal to assemble the best sounding rough cut in a timely fashion. Julie emphasized that it's important for production mixers to stay in touch and check in with the editors after a few days of filming to see how things are going and get any notes. Next, I asked Julie if she had any global preferences as it pertains to the production mix.

"First and foremost, having good clean ISO's (lavs) because what we're trying to do is represent the story. Even if we're

Jason Freeman MPSE



missing some of that great atmosphere you hear on the boom, the producers really want to make sure they got the lines. Even if it's more rough sounding, we'll always prefer the most clear dialogue tracks. So, it's important that the lavs are always working and are clean and clear of fabric noise. Also, having good levels [is] very important. I'm really hoping that the lav track will always be a go-to source when we need to grab a line that may not cut the way we need on a mix track."

The Dialogue Editor

Continuing forward, I reached out to ADR supervisor and dialogue editor **Jason Freeman MPSE**. Jason and I also worked on the same Hulu streaming series together as Julie, and his work ethic, understanding of the process, and

enthusiasm toward the craft is infectious. Jason typically works with award-winning supervising sound editor Mark Stoeckinger and has recently worked on films such as *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*, *John Wick: Chapter 4*, and *The Fall Guy*. I met with Jason and asked him to break down his process and share what his goal is as a dialogue editor to get tracks ready for the mix. I began our conversation by asking Jason about the flow of his process.

"Often times, I'll get a reel or rough cut preview mix from the editor in the form of an AAF which includes music, sound effects, and dialogue. Next, I'll bring in the assembly and I'll use the [Sound Radix] plugin Auto-Align, which phase and time aligns the boom and lav tracks. If you're working as a dialogue editor, a mandatory plugin is Auto-Align. Cutting both the boom and lav is becoming more common now in features."

"When it comes to using the boom versus wire, it's not really always a choice of ours. I love the sound of a good boom, but most oftentimes in action, for instance, the sets are so large that directors and cinematographers want to showcase that. If we had a great boom, we would certainly use it! But I'm finding the cinematography of the scenes now are so stepped back. In John Wick, for instance, the boom is often simply not there because it comes down to the choice of cinematography."

Jason also elaborated on some of his new favorite plugins that are being driven by AI technology that are breaking the barriers of what's possible in the dialogue edit. He spoke about one particular plugin tool called "Hush" which can change the perspective of the boom by removing the reverb around it and also noise reduce simultaneously, emulating the sound of closer perspective when they need it. This really helps save the boom when it otherwise could be unusable.

The logo for Hush Pro features the text "Hush Pro" in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below it, the text "AI-powered dialogue repair" is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. The background is a solid blue color.The logo for Auto Align 2 features a stylized blue and white circular icon on the left, followed by the text "AUTO ALIGN 2" in a white, sans-serif font. The background is a dark blue color with a subtle grid pattern.

Jason spoke about the use of Auto-Align and some of his other favorite noise-reduction and dialogue clean-up tools. Jason's goal is to create the best possible representation of the usable ISO tracks to be used for the mix. If something is not working, it's simply discarded and the tracks that are usable are cleaned up and prepared for the dialogue mix. I asked Jason to elaborate on the use of Auto-Align to find out what kind of flexibility he is achieving for the re-recording mixer.

"The boom is usually great, providing it has enough full sound in it. But what a lot of us like is the chestiness and low end you get out of a lav, and to get that chest resonance combined with the air of the boom sounds so good! If you have a decent boom and layer that lav underneath and they're both in phase, it sounds like you're listening to that person in real life and it gives you so much control of perspectives in the mix."

I could relate because I also practice creating perspectives in a mix by combing the boom and wires to match picture in my production mixes. By changing the relationship of the two, you can create perspectives that otherwise would not be possible. Hearing that this is also commonly practiced in post was intriguing to me. I then asked Jason to elaborate on how he handles cuts where the boom is not present—such as a wide-and-tight—and how often he's having to lean on the wires only.

"I was fortunate to beta test the Hush plugin tool on the feature film The Fall Guy. It literally saved a very emotional two-minute scene of Ryan Gosling which was captured on the boom on board an aluminum boat where the wires were simply not there. The boom would have been fine, but all we're hearing is lapping water smashing against the aluminum boat. The Hush plugin saved the performance which would have been seemingly impossible to recreate in ADR."

The Re-Recording Mixer

Finally, I was fortunate to have a conversation with re-recording mixer **Tom Fleischman CAS**. Tom started his mixing career in 1978 and has mixed nearly 200 features, documentaries, and television projects and is a CAS Career Achievement Award recipient. Tom won an Oscar for his work on Martin Scorsese's feature film *Hugo*, has another four nominations along with 18 wins for CAS Awards, BAFTA, and Primetime Emmys. Tom began our conversation with an overview of how the evolution of technology for capturing production sound played a role in what was used, relative to microphones and what tools were available for the final mix. I then asked Tom to discuss with me his current methodology and process.

"I'm always looking at the picture, and I'm trying to see the movie as the audience is going to see it. So I'll use whatever combination of tracks works with the other elements in the mix. It's during the dialogue predub that I listen all the way through all of the mics. What's determined usable is what's kept and what's not is removed. Choosing track possibilities

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is very much a collaborative effort between the dialogue editor and the dialogue mixer. When it comes down to which dialogue tracks are used, it's really a case by case, shot by shot decision-making process during the dialogue predub. In a final mix, you don't want to be dealing with what mic sounds best."

Being curious about the predub process, I asked Tom to elaborate a bit on that process and give me some specific examples of how he ends up choosing which tracks to use for the dialogue mix and what are some of the key factors when making those choices.

"It depends upon the material. I do try and use the boom as much as possible. Usually when the boom mic is further away or a little off axis, that's where the lav becomes really useful to provide that nice dry signal while still using the boom to create the sense of space. First and foremost, I want to hear what's being said. A good clean full-range signal on the voice is necessary. You have to look at the picture and see how the whole scene is going to play and I'll need to determine how am I going to maximize the quality of the dialogue."

I was enthralled listening to Tom talk about his approach to a dialogue mix. It's crystal clear to me that my goal as the production mixer is to get the best possible tracks that I'm able to and adjust my approach to the cinematography styles or anything else that's thrown at us. Because of my conversation with Tom, I realized that any bias I have toward one mic source relative to the other is insignificant. It's about getting the best tracks I can. It really comes down to flexibility, ingenuity, and practicing the basics proficiently. Next, I asked Tom to elaborate if mic choice—or lack thereof—can affect dialogue intelligibility.

"The whole idea of the movie depends on hearing the dialogue. The entire scene must flow from beginning to end so the audience is not disturbed because the quality of the voice is changing from one shot to another. The last thing I want is for the audience to notice the mix. They should be following the dialogue and the story and be captivated by what's happening on the screen. When it comes to episodic streaming with near field mixes, there's a problem whereas the mixers aren't getting the proper time. With turnaround times less than two or three days, they may not get the opportunity to properly finesse the dialogue, which could play a role with intelligibility and/or how the mics are chosen or used."

It is apparent to me that Tom has a strong understanding of

Tom Fleischman CAS



process. His goals are clear, defined, and simple. That kid from the '80s that I introduced at the top of this article just felt like he met the Yoda of re-recording mixers on the planet Dagobah! But it made me wonder about this idea floating around in my head—the superiority of the sound of the boom versus the wires. I clearly understand the need for both, but how did Tom feel about the subject? So, I squarely asked Tom to elaborate on his personal preference of boom versus wires and when he would specifically choose one over the other.

"If you can get a boom in close enough to pick up a good signal, it does everything better. But, we need to make sure the lav sounds good because if it's noisy, that's a dialogue killer. Because very often the lavs help fill in a boom track that's a little too far away for the perspective that the audience is seeing. It's also important that the boom is over the widest shot because sometimes that track is very useful [since] the lavs are very dry and flat and they lack dynamics. The boom allows us to get a sense of space."

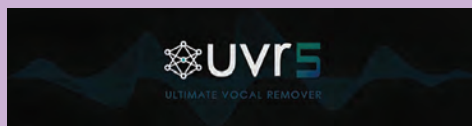
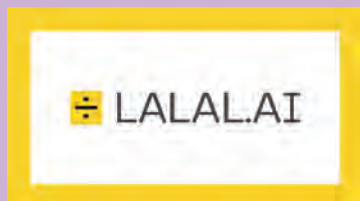
With this response, it was clear to me that Tom didn't have any real strong biases toward one mic source versus another. What combination of tracks he chooses is solely dependent upon his goals to achieve the best possible mix.

I really appreciated my conversations with Stephen, Julie, Jason, and Tom. It has truly impacted me as a production mixer. As Tom mentioned earlier, he's looking at the picture and mixing the film as the audience will see it. In a way, he's mixing for that kid who is sitting in a theater somewhere right now in front of a big screen who, maybe one day, will have the opportunity to sit behind the console like Tom on Stage B at Soundtrack Film and Television in New York.



Music Rebalancing Software Shootout

by David Bondelevitch CAS MPSE



For this article, I took a look at various tools for rebalancing music as film mixes may need the tracks rebalanced for any number of reasons, from pulling the vocals down or out to avoid dialogue to replacing the vocalist or cleaning up a mix that is in some way lacking. If a musical sequence is performed to a track that only exists in the released version, it is useful for rebalancing and fixing lip sync. One could also solo the vocals on a master and add a new arrangement to them.

Shortly into my tests, I realized that these programs are much more difficult to use effectively than expected. I deliberately chose songs famous for being badly mixed, starting with The Beatles Hamburg "Bootlegs." Perhaps it is because they are mono and in such bad shape that none of the apps I tried on any of the songs gave back anything useful. All the apps have issues with aliasing and envelopes. In this case, the aliasing made it completely unusable. I had hoped that after splitting the tracks, I could do noise reduction and de-reverbing individually, but with the aliasing, that was impossible. Phase-coherency is an issue with all these apps, as far as I could tell.

My second attempt was on a Nina Simone recording of "Mississippi Goddam," where she speaks off-mic at the beginning while accompanying herself on piano, then starts to sing the song. I had hoped to be able to clean up her speech so that you could hear her introduction better, as the song is a historical part of the Civil Rights movement. This also failed; I found it impossible to make her speaking voice useable.

My third attempt was the Stan Kenton arrangement of "MacArthur Park." The whole mix was done live to two-track

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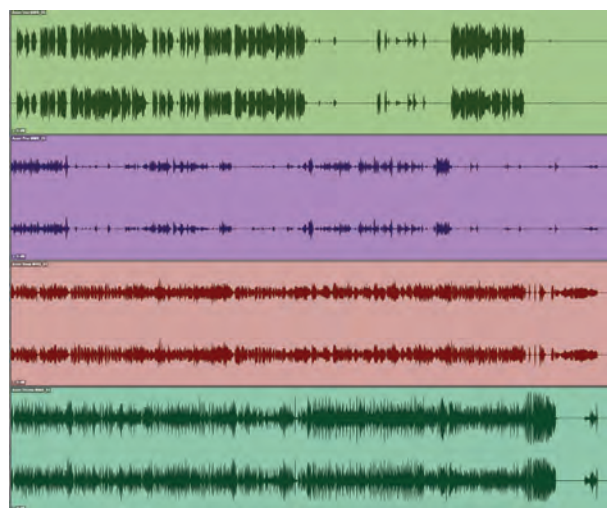
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with what sounds like only two mics, and the balances were awful. In addition, there is a section where the band sings one chorus and they are almost inaudible (and not very good). I had hoped to be able to make their voices sound better. Additionally, I wanted to get the rhythm section separate enough to be remixed, but this also failed. Unfortunately, with a band of 25 players, none of the apps could separate things well.

My final attempt was the notoriously badly mixed and mastered Chicago track “Make Me Smile.” The master always sounded to me like it was played from a cassette tape. Everything is muddy, especially the drums. Listen to that track back-to-back with any other Chicago track from their second album on and you can hear the immediate difference. The processing results were much better. I suspect part of it is that the stereo separation of instruments is quite good.

Here are the different apps I tried, along with my reactions to them. Your results may vary significantly based on the songs you try. These reactions are based on the sources I chose. The separation images are for the song “Make Me Smile.” See the separate table for specifications and features of each program.



Acon Digital Remix

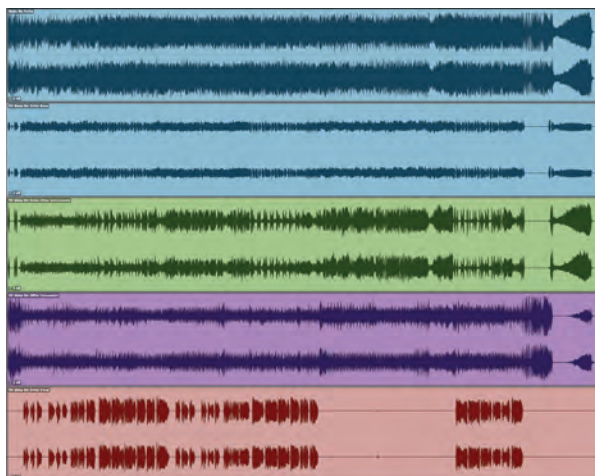
Acon Digital Remix can be used differently than any of the other apps by applying it as an insert and creating sends and returns to give you splits in real time. It splits into five stems, although oddly, there is no guitar stem. Most of the guitar wound up on the piano stem. One of the nice things is that it allows you to adjust the sensitivity controls for each track. However, I found it to be very weak in terms of aliasing. The aliasing on the vocals alone made this unusable for me. One commonality on all of these is that the envelopes of individual instruments tend to disappear, as though using a badly set expander. In this case, the bass track had no attack at all and that made it sound completely unlike the bass in the mix. The track labeled “Other” should have included only the horns, but it had bleed from all tracks, including the vocals.



Lalal.AI

This app came very highly recommended. It is a “pay as you go” app that you pay for by buying a bank of minutes. The minutes are not the length of the song, it is the length of all the splits that you do. This app does the processing online, so you need to be connected to the internet and upload your material (which may not sit well with studios). It can split up to nine stems, but you can only process one stem at a time. There is a functional iOS app as well.

The envelopes were one of the biggest problems with the stems that it created. The horns have almost no attack on them. One split was synths, but with no synths, it put some of the vocals on the synth track. It correctly deduced that there are no strings. Lalal had a better attack on the bass than Acon did. The biggest issue for me was that the sum of the stems sounded nothing like the original mix. If your goal is a complete remix, that may be okay, but if it is for something relatively simple, I would expect too much time spent matching the original mix. I was let down given all the recommendations for this program.

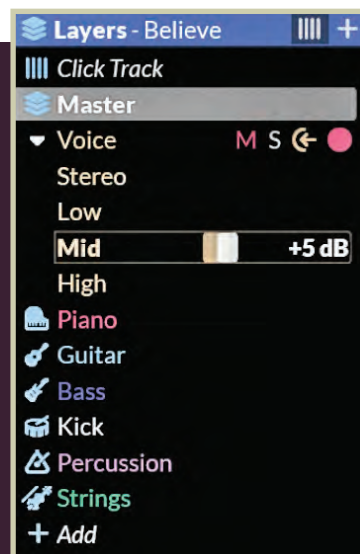
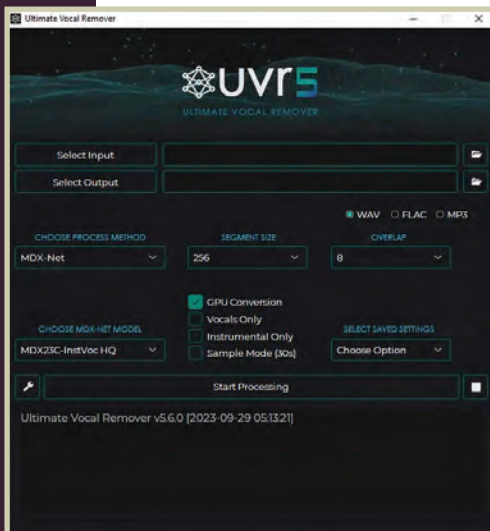


iZotope RX 11 Music Rebalance

Relative to some of the other programs, I found iZotope’s RX Music Balance to be extremely slow at processing. It gives only four splits; Vox, Bass, Drums, and “Other,” which includes

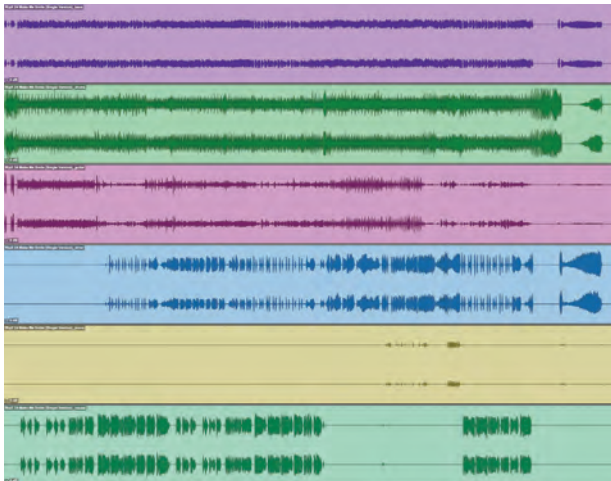


	Acon Digital Remix	Lalal.ai	RX 11 Standard Music Rebalance	Moises	RipX DAW Pro (HitnMix)	Ultimate Vocal Remover
Price	\$49.90	\$20.00 / 90 mins	\$399.00	\$299 / annual	\$198.00	FREE!
Run in Real Time	Requires Send Setup	No. Online only, one stem at a time.	No. Must use App.	No	No	No
Stems	5	9	4	6	5	4
Vox	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bass	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Drums	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Horns / Other	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Acoustic / Rhythm Guitar	•	✓	•	✓	•	•
Electric / Lead Guitar	•	✓	•	✓	✓	•
Piano	✓	✓	•	•	✓	•
Synths	•	✓	•	•	•	•
Strings	•	✓	•	•	•	•
Dialogue / Effects / Music Separation	•	•	•	✓	•	•
File Formats	WAV	WAV, FLAC, AVI, MP4, MKV, AIFF, AAC, OGG	WAV	WAV, FLAC, M4A, MP4, MOV, or WMA	MP3, FLAC, Ogg, CDA, WAV, MIDI and Rip	WAV
Plugin Types	4	App only	3	1	1	App
VST	✓	•	•	✓	✓	•
VST3	✓	•	✓	•	•	•
AAX	✓	•	✓	•	•	•
AU	✓	•	✓	•	•	•
Sensitivity controls for each stem	✓	No	✓	No	No	No



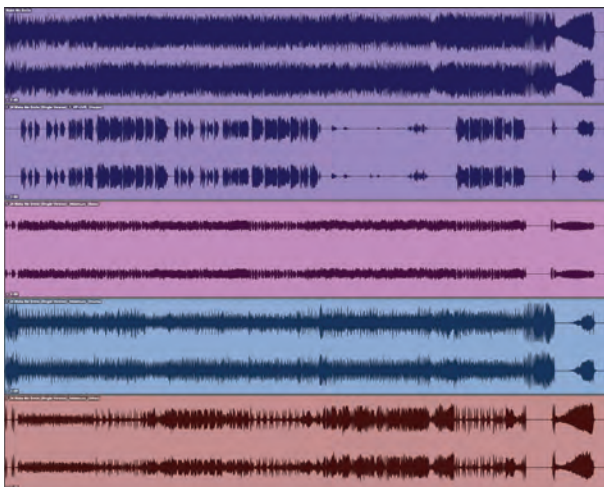
Clockwise from top left: Lalal.AI, Moises.AI, iZotope RX 11 Music Rebalance, Acon Digital Remix, RipX DAW, and Ultimate Vocal Remover.

guitars, keys, and horns. This had some of the worst aliasing on all tracks. The vocals were very shrill. Somehow, the bass had weird overtones added (possibly from the guitars and horns?). I was surprised that RX performed so poorly. Personally, I do not consider the stems to be usable.



RipX DAW (Hit'n'Mix)

I had not heard of RipX DAW, it just started showing up after I did a few searches for other programs. It is essentially a music tool for DJ's that includes stem separation. The bass sounded good, with some occasional peculiar distortion. The vocals had far too much aliasing and were much too bright. One way to check for aliasing is to listen to the cymbals, and in this case, it was immediately evident. There was also a lot of guitar bleed on the horns track. These tracks were essentially unusable.



Ultimate Vocal Remover (UVR)

The Ultimate Vocal Remover can't be beat for the price. It's free and open source! This means there is no manual or support, and you have to spend a lot of time futzing around with it to find the best algorithm for what you are doing. That's great if you have patience or can take a lot of time to learn the program, but for quick changes, I did not find it as useful. It can split into four stems. The stem splits were pretty good, but still had aliasing.



Moises.AI

Moises, like Lalal, does its processing online. It is subscription-based. This had significantly less aliasing than the other programs. In addition to splitting up to six tracks, it also creates a metronome track, as well as deducing the keys and chord structures of the piece, all the way down to giving tablature for guitarists, including "Capo Mode"—very cool! Tracks can be exported as WAV files in the web app only unless you buy a Pro subscription.

This had the best bass extraction by far, with complete attack and decay. There was still audible aliasing on cymbals and some on the vocals. The brass attacks were not great, and there were some horns on the lead guitar track. However, I would rate Moises as the most useful for extracting individual parts.

I did find that to make most stems usable, I had to add at least a little reverb to correct for the envelopes being cut off (and it can sometimes mask some of the aliasing if you are lucky). This, of course, makes the mix sound different, although you may end up adding reverb for a film mix anyway. I also did some experiments trying to take the best version of each track from all the apps and see if they could blend together. As I expected, it introduced more problems, however, I think you could choose one program for most of the tracks and maybe sneak in a split from another program (again using lots of reverb).

Conclusion

While my assessments may be a little harsh, I completely understand that we are still at the beginning of what separation tools will someday be able to accomplish. And while none of these are near the level of Peter Jackson's "MAL" (Machine Audio Learning) separation software that was used on recent Beatles projects, I believe they will get significantly better, probably sooner than most of us would expect. Acon, Lalal, and UVR all have affordable entry-level versions. RX Music Rebalance is included in RX Standard. RipX DAW has an entry-level option (and educational discount). Personally, before investing a lot of money in any of these programs, I will wait a while to see what happens or buy them as needed.

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My Evolution in Documentary Sound

by Keith Hodne CAS



It was an awkward, ill-timed joke, “Well, now we know why other cultures bow!” I said this to Jason Hehir, director of HBO’s *The Last Dance*, as we said our goodbyes after coming up with our “shelter in place” plan. We needed to complete eight more episodes of the series. I was in the studio mixing Episode 102 in early 2020, and we all felt what was coming. *The Last Dance* was a super large-scale audio

production—especially in terms of documentary work—with major players possessing vastly conflicting opinions on mixes. It was the biggest mix I had ever been on, and now we were taking it to our homes. Working on documentaries most of my life, I loved the challenge. Don’t get me wrong, it was very tough, but it was so rewarding.

In the case of *The Last Dance*, we had all the pieces of the puzzle that you would typically see in a union scripted production for audio. For me, it wasn’t always like this. But where Netflix, HBO, Apple+, and other streamers have taken from the in-person theatrical feature sector, they have given to epic docuseries and feature-length documentary projects.

But how the heck did I get here?

After graduating, I started working at an NYC post house, where most of our work was reality TV and documentaries. I was lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time for the reality TV boom. Prior to that, my earliest long-format jobs were working on multiple A&E *Biography* projects, featuring





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Garcia, and Samuel L. Jackson. While these were incredible projects to be working on, I was probably not experienced enough to take these on solo, being under 20 years old and pretty green. Yet, the clients were always happy.

If I told you there were three stereo tracks of music: a stereo music reverb, 2-4 tracks of dialogue, and 4-8 of mono/stereo FX and ambiences, this would be generous. The shows were fairly groundbreaking, but had slow-moving floating photographs for GFX visuals cut in between archival film clips and talking-head interviews. The work felt important and helped me figure out the path to success in the industry. I learned how to craft a solid mix in a reasonably short time, make the clients happy, and pass network deliverables.

On the other hand, reality TV was at a much more grueling pace. For 10 years, I worked on shows like *The First 48* and more than 450 episodes of MTV's *True Life*, *Amish Mafia*, and similar spinoff series, but also many great sports documentaries for ESPN's *30 for 30*. Typically, it was three days in and out for a 45-minute program. That contained a full dialogue/B-roll edit, all ambiences, and as many FX as you could add to make it all work. This also included an almost final mix to present to the client.

Much of it was a blur; you had to use your instincts to craft the audio. This was in preparation for the 4- to 6-hour client-supervised review on the third day. There was a lot of Sony/Sonnox de-noising and Waves de-clicking—the basic restoration tools if the studio didn't provide a Cedar NR box

celebrities like P. Diddy (yes ... I know), Andy

or plugins. And just when we thought we had a system down for mixing with VU and peak meters, the Dolby LM100 and its Dialnorm spec were put into place to help combat some of the loudness manipulation some “mixers” were achieving through digital limiters and compressors. I'm sure we all remember when the \$3,200 LM100 turned the industry upside down for a while—and how annoying it was to initially implement.

Sidenote: I actually purchased one from eBay for prosperity for \$15 a few years back!

In the long run, that meter and its digital equivalents allowed for greater level stability across a network (well, sort of). And once iZotope RX hit the market around 2007, we were able to bring clarity to compromised source dialogue that was previously unimaginable (with exponential improvements ever since).

I had been grinding at that pace for years. I became aware of guilds, awards, and the mix magicians at the top of the game. I started analyzing who I looked at as the masters of the documentary and nonfiction mix: Ken Hahn, Bob Bronow CAS, and Dominick Tavella, to name a few. Personally inspired, I was growing my skill set through experience and analyzing the work of others. I always tried to add a higher level of storytelling through audio and my mix.

This also aligned with the evolution of documentary projects, which were no longer just telling stories about a celebrity success, a historical figure, or an event-specific timeline. Networks, directors, and viewers were requiring so much more. There were deep dives into obscure moments and stories you may not have heard of before. In my humble



“

Typically, it was three days in and out for a 45-minute program. That contained a full dialogue/B-roll edit, all ambiances, and as many FX as you could add to make it all work. This also included an almost final mix to present to the client.

”

opinion, Netflix kickstarted the need and desire for more exciting documentaries and docuseries. While these were scripted dramas, the newly founded binge-watching “Netflix and Chill” that was available with *House of Cards* and *Orange Is the New Black*, for example, changed how we ingested these shows. Viewers could access shows instantaneously and plow through everything in a day or two. The documentary is where it is today as a result of the streamers’ viewership and the rise of more content.

In 2016, ESPN’s *O.J.: Made in America* was nominated for a CAS Award in the Motion Pictures – Documentary category. It was the Cinema Audio Society’s first year recognizing this category. It was also my first actual award nomination, and a tremendous honor to be recognized. It truly felt like real validation for all the countless late nights and hours in the studio. *O.J.: Made in America* was 8½ hours long, and because of the project’s large scope, I could have a dialogue editor and pre-mixer as part of my audio post team. We threw everything at it sonically. Director Ezra Edelman listened to the famous Nicole Brown Simpson “kill scene” we designed and tore it all apart. It was too heavily mixed, too heavily panned, too sound designed. From his critique, we stripped it to its bare minimum, and it became super impactful. It was a valuable lesson that, while we have come to a certain point of creative ability coupled with the power of technology, the story is always king. Sometimes we can let the art of sound get in the way of telling a story.

Since that epic project, it has been full steam ahead. *O.J.* blurred the lines about a film versus a television production.

It won the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature and received six Emmy nominations. The Emmy rules for entry were changed soon after that production.

There were many projects in between, but *O.J.: Made in America* led to *The Last Dance*, which led to working with Chris Smith on HBO’s *100 Foot Wave*. My team kept growing with each larger project, and after seeing the rough cut of *100 Foot Wave*, I knew it would be a truly epic project. My immediate response was, “This is going to be a ton of work, we need to gear up the team, and we probably won’t be sleeping anytime soon.” My gut reaction was to watch the work of re-recording mixer Tom Fleischman CAS and Ric Schnupp’s work on *Free Solo*, as I felt the projects were in a similar vein. Man vs. nature and, more specifically, man vs. him or herself. Significantly different than my earliest shows, *100 Foot Wave* was a team of six. I was the supervising sound editor and re-recording mixer, and we had a dialogue editor, two sound designers, and two FX editors cutting every episode. Believe it or not, it wasn’t enough. Unfortunately, we didn’t receive personal accolades for Season 1, but the series was nominated for an Emmy, which was extremely rewarding. That made us push harder going into Season 2.

Through the years, I have been lucky enough to be a part of projects both big and small, union and nonunion, one-person to two-person tag team mixing, 20 tracks as in A&E *Biography*, to around 300 tracks as in *100 Foot Wave*. And when we could, we threw everything at the wall in Season 2. Everything was almost on scale with a union scripted feature.



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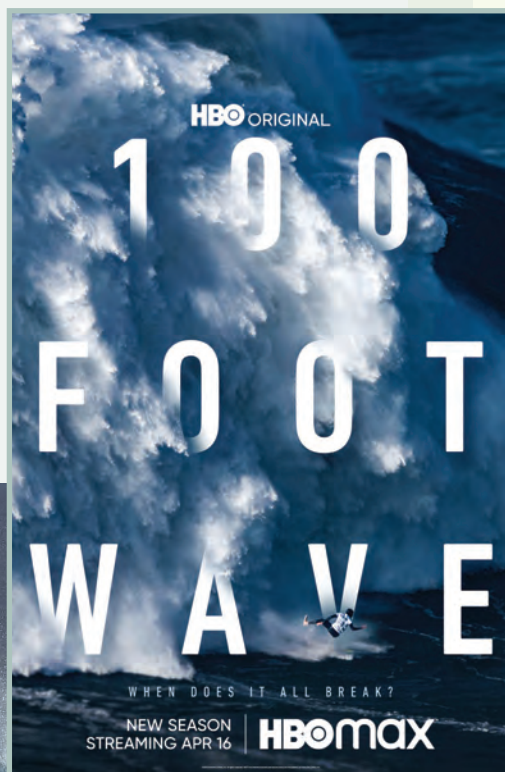
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For years, I feel like our “little documentary jobs” with smaller budgets were considered “lesser than.” We know that audio work, in virtually any form, can be grueling. However, we do it because we have a crazy passion for it. The thrill we receive when we come out of that black hole and listen to a difficult job that is well done. The countless hours in a dark mix room, staring at a computer screen, and tweaking knobs on your mixing board, burning the silica in your ears to perfect the mix, is unmatched. I can’t get enough of it.

I am a new Active member of CAS. Thank you, Stephen Tibbo CAS and Kurt Kassulke CAS for extending your kindness and for the opportunity. I am humbled and honored to be a part of this amazing community, with some of the most talented people I have ever laid ears on and, most importantly, to get the chance to help evolve documentary audio.



Above: Pro Tools timeline for an episode of 100 Foot Wave.



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A promotional image for the TV series 'Mr. & Mrs. Smith'. It features a man and a woman lying on a floor covered in blood, looking at each other intensely. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right.

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mrs.
smith**

A promotional image for the TV series 'The Boys'. It shows a man in a blue superhero suit standing in a destroyed building with debris on the floor. In the foreground, there are blurred figures of people and a large fire.

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THE SOUNDING BOARD

a Cinema Audio Society & Motion Picture Sound Editors event

by Kurt Kassulke CAS

On October 20, 2024, we made a move to the School of Cinematic Arts at USC to hold our fourth year of the CAS & MPSE Sounding Board. It was a wonderful day mingling with fellow mixers, editors, and interested colleagues and friends. Thanks to all the CAS and MPSE volunteers, organizers, and speakers who made this year's event so successful. The lineup of panel discussions, best practice forums, Parade of Carts and Bags, and vendor tables was insightful, innovative, and inspiring.

The event started at 9:00 with an informal breakfast and socializing, then kicked into gear at 10:00 with a varied program of panels. Topics ranged from "Say What"—exploring why dialogue intelligibility is in the news (and brainstorming possible solutions to keep people from having to turn on subtitles); to "It's All Fun and Games"—breaking down the unique challenges and techniques required to craft cinematically

expressive sound for games; and "The Mad Hatters"—featuring a lively discussion about the perils and advantages of juggling multiple positions while working on a project.

The new Best Practices presentations included "Re- Re- Re-Conforming"—hard-won wisdom for efficient conforming of projects; "Communication Breakdown"—tips on improving







David Barber MPSE and Peter Kurland CAS present Mark Lanza MPSE of EIPMA with a check of the event's proceeds.



writing and reading of production notes to improve efficiency; “De-Noise Shoot Out”—real examples of best performers in the latest batch of AI noise-reduction plugins; and “Calibration and EQ”—offering effective tactics to properly calibrate and equalize your room.

In addition to the discussions, the Parade of Carts and Bags, along with vendor tables, offered a wonderful array of technology, both old and new for production and post, with experienced colleagues available to connect and educate on the full capabilities of the equipment shown.

During the event, CAS President Peter Kurland and MPSE President David Barber shared their joy to be with the members in our first year at USC in the School of Cinematic Arts. They thanked professors Richard Burton and Midge Costin (a recent CAS new member) for their work with Dean Elizabeth M. Daley and the School of Cinematic Arts for their partnership in helping the event to grow and find a new home. The Presidents concluded their remarks with the presentation of a check to Mark Lanza MPSE who was representing EIPMA. The

Entertainment Industry Professionals Mentoring Alliance, an organization close to the hearts of both the CAS and MPSE organizations, was established after the passing of industry veteran Paul Rodriguez, who gave his time and experience so generously to those wanting to learn. EIPMA’s mission, to give career guidance for individuals seeking craft and technical careers in the entertainment industry, is aligned with that of both the MPSE and the CAS. The \$4,000 check was a rounded-up figure from all the ticket sales for the day.

Given the short turnaround time from the event and our publication, we are featuring the Parade of Carts and Bags, along with the panel event “Communication Breakdown.” More in-depth coverage will be included in our Spring CAS *Quarterly*. Also, videos from the event will be posted to the CAS website under the Events tab shortly.

The event was well-attended, and there are plans to make greater use of this wonderful venue next year. I hope to see even more of you at The Sound Board v5.0!



Some of our wonderful volunteers!

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PRODUCTION
SOUND MIXER

JIMMY BOYLE
SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR /
SOUND DESIGNER

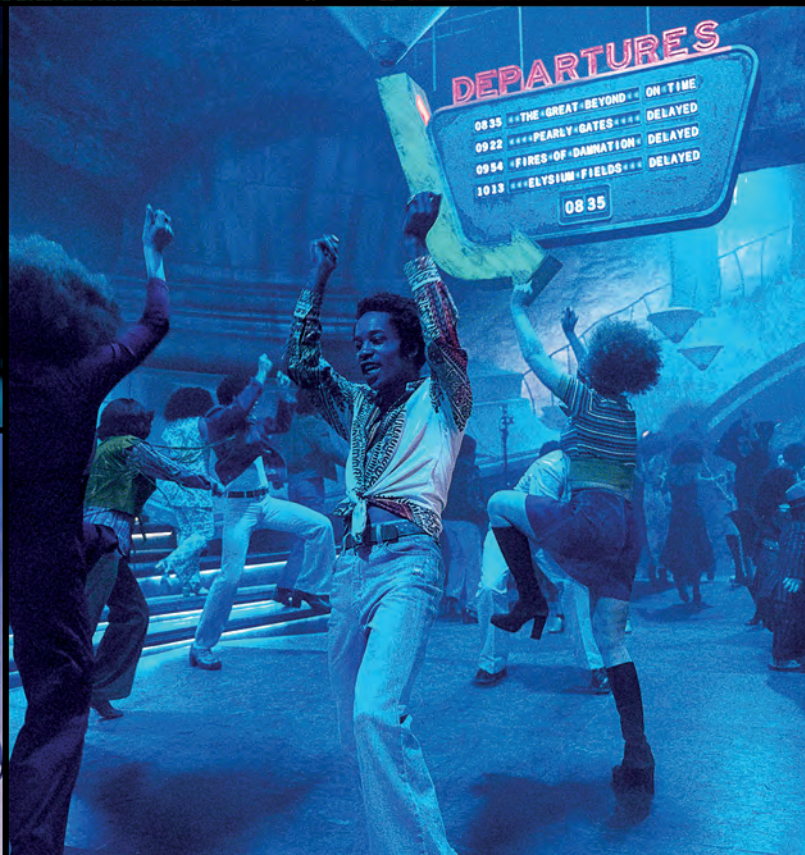
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MIXERS

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DISPLAY OF PURE
INSPIRATION"

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Best Practices: Communication Breakdown Panel

ENHANCING COLLABORATION BETWEEN PRODUCTION AND POST SOUND TEAMS

by CAS Associate Kevin Khor



In a recent discussion, longtime collaborators Amanda Beggs CAS and Brent Kiser CAS MPSE emphasized the importance of communication between production and post sound teams. One key question raised was whether production sound reports reach the post sound team and if they are useful. Another question was whether room tone is truly necessary and worth holding up production for. The truth is that room tone is rarely used, if at all, during the dialogue editing process (you can thank us later, production). They argued that more detailed notes—such as which characters are captured by which boom and which microphones are usable for each take—are more helpful and can significantly enhance the workflow.

Establishing a dialogue early in the process is crucial, and it is up to the post sound teams to initiate conversations with production, as they are often attached to the project later. This kickstarts a collaborative environment within the sound department as a whole. For instance, if production captures environmental soundscapes or unique sound effects on set, the established connection allows production sound mixers to inform the post teams, ensuring that their hard work reaches its destination. More often than not, these recordings can get lost during the editorial process, making all that effort go to waste.

Brent and Amanda highlighted the usefulness of including microphone brand and model numbers in the metadata, as this can assist in matching ADR, especially when using unique microphones such as boundary mics. This proactive approach saves time and eliminates the need for post to follow up with production for missing information.

A few other interesting points raised during the panel included the importance of bringing on a post sound supervisor early, as they can help incorporate sound effects during editorial, reducing the risk of “temp love” and the use of sound effects sourced from the internet. The topic of documentaries was also discussed. This genre is like the Wild West, where files often lack proper metadata, leaving post teams to guess which microphones provided the best sound. This underscores the necessity for better educational resources for documentary filmmakers.

Ultimately, Amanda and Brent concluded that sound professionals need to stick together and work cohesively. Advocating for better practices and mutual support—sometimes even on set—can enhance overall sound quality and help bring the director’s vision to life.

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DUNE
PART TWO

Parade of Carts and Bags

by CAS Associate Kevin Khor



This year's Parade of Carts and Bags featured a diverse array of sound carts, showcasing how each was tailored to meet the specific needs of their production sound mixers.



David Husby CAS

DAVID HUSBY CAS from Vancouver, known for his work on the upcoming film *The Electric State*, presented a brand-new cart designed for a smaller footprint. He prefers compact carts that allow him to be in the middle of the action. His cart took two months to create and one of the eye-catching customizations is his Bose companion speakers attached to the top for playback and vibing during wrap. His next upgrade will be to fortify it against any inclement weather.

BENEDICT GREEN specializes in capturing spatial audio for VR, AR, and mixed reality experiences. He showcased the two ambisonics microphones he uses—the Zoom H3-VR and Sennheiser AMBEO VR Mic—connected to a Zoom F8 in a bag. The bag allows him to hide behind objects and out of sight from the 360-degree camera. The Zoom mic is advantageous for remaining out of sight; having a recorder built-in makes it easy to attach to the camera. However, the Sennheiser is better

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suited for field recording. Interestingly, a challenge in this format is managing overlapping dialogue when characters are radio miked during a shot as this can result in audio bleed, creating phase issues with other characters in the wrong space.

ERIC BALLEW introduced his new cart from Cannibal Industries, the smallest in the parade but packed with two built-in computers and full Dante compatibility. His company is a service disabled veteran-owned small business, and all his carts are made in the USA. The cart is also designed to give sound mixers control by having all the parts sourced from accessible suppliers in case of repairs and modifications.



Eric Ballew



Benedict Green



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Fernando Muga CAS



FERNANDO MUGA CAS, with 26 years of experience, brought his five-year-old cart, Dolores, which he created after upgrading to the Sound Devices 888 and CL-12. This cart helps him remain mobile across locations. He also showcased his Snap-On-Rack Panels, made up of a lightweight durable fabric. The sets allow users to customize button placements for various sound carts. He even showed off a prototype panel with the ability to write notes about inputs or outputs or to leave notes for crew.

MICHAEL O'HENEY came with his trusty DIY sound cart with a Magliner mini-base, which he has used since 2012. He added standard 19-inch racks for his receivers and customized smaller shelves to reduce clutter. His cart, which holds three monitors for video links, has accompanied him through thick and thin over the years.

SCOTT HARBER showcased his two-piece cart system. The smaller cart, which houses his receivers, remains on set and connects to a larger cart containing his main equipment. This setup allows him to maintain distance on set, a practice he adopted during COVID-19. Another neat addition is that the smaller cart includes a multi-plug for timecode jamming. Also, the arrangement of his taller cart allows him to mix while standing, a preference he likes so that he can be more engaged while on set.

Scott Harber



Michael O'Heney



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CHALLENGERS

WRITTEN BY JUSTIN KURITZKES DIRECTED BY LUCA GUADAGNINO

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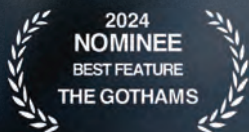
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PRODUCTION SOUND MIXER

CRAIG BERKEY
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SCREENPLAY BY RAMELL ROSS & JOSLYN BARNES
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JAMIE CAMPBELL CAS, originally from England, has lived in L.A. for 16 years. He brought his easy-to-assemble mid-sized cart, which folds neatly in the trunk of his sedan. This setup has no monitors and is bare-bones designed for on-location days. Being able to put his Aaton Cantar on the top shelf, Jamie also enjoys mixing while standing for greater engagement and quick response.

ROBERT SHARMAN CAS exhibited the most comprehensive range of carts, from his smallest mobile rig to his larger workstation. His compact cart is used for on-location days, with the bag affording greater mobility in case he needs to grab his recorder and get his boots dirty. But even though it's compact, it still holds three displays for video monitoring. The larger rig consists of two pieces—one housing the recorder, mixing console, monitors, and antennas, and the other serving as a workbench for additional equipment. Both carts operate independently, allowing him to adapt to any production scenario.



Jamie Campbell CAS



Robert Sharman CAS

GETTING OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

by CAS Associate Sam Casas

One of the things I find most challenging as a mixer is finding new ways to be inspired. At a certain point, you might start to think, well, I know how to do the job, but perhaps I'm falling into a rut. So how can we think outside of the box, keep growing, overcome obstacles, and get out of our comfort zone?



I've always been an advocate of learning and have found inspiration recently from listening to business audiobooks while taking a morning hike. Listening to these types of books gives me a lot of insight into human psychology, different ways to communicate effectively, and how to respect the value I can bring to a project to ensure I'm working with the right clients and being compensated at an appropriate rate. Exercise, fresh air, and the visual stimulation of nature makes my body feel good and offers a mental reset.

Another source of inspiration is just talking to people and asking a lot of open-ended questions. One of my favorites is, "What's on your mind?" Not everyone will give you a life-changing answer, but you might just make someone's day by showing a genuine interest in their thoughts.

When I began writing for this magazine, I was definitely outside of my comfort zone. I hated writing papers in college and, as a natural tinker, it was hard to know when to stop editing. But through talking with other mixers, I've learned there are many different ways to be a great mixer. So, I can just pick and choose what works best for me.

Another wonderful thing about writing for the *CAS Quarterly* is that I get to pick the brains of so many of you—the best in the biz! I asked Lindsey Alvarez CAS, Craig Henighan CAS, Nicole A. Fletcher, and Ken S. Polk CAS to share what they like to do to get inspired,

stay motivated, and get out of their comfort zones.

Lindsey Alvarez CAS

When I'm feeling a bit of a creative roadblock or overwhelmed, I have a few suggestions. Simply and calmly remove yourself from the console for a few minutes. Pass it over to your mix partner and go for a walk. Better yet, take a walk together and talk about anything else.

If you're working on a lot, maybe you'll stumble into the property department, which has a treasure trove of film memorabilia. Speaking from experience, seeing all those cool trinkets is truly awesome and inspiring.

I've also had situations where I finish the day and I'm so drained and think, "How am I going to come back with an open mind?" My answer is waking up early for a yoga workout and meditation. For me, it really works!!

Craig Henighan CAS

Chance Operations is something that I'll visit from time to time, having been inspired by the works of John Cage. This is the practice of generating sounds and mixes independently of how I "think" they should go together. It's akin to "throwing darts or rolling dice." You're looking for a side angle or a viewpoint that you might not have thought of if you'd built up a mix for a scene the same way you always do. It can also happen when a director says something—even one word—and it sets you off in a whole

Lindsey Alvarez CAS



Craig Henighan CAS



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MOTION PICTURES – DOCUMENTARY

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other direction and now you're empowered because you have their support. It can be a fun way to discover another layer of sonic storytelling.

If I'm struggling to find my place within a heavy music section during a final mix, for instance, I'll often turn everything off, including the projector. I'll listen first to the music on its own, then add in the dialogue tracks. I listen to the scene several times and mark on a notepad where I'd like to try to highlight a sound. Next, turn on the projector, highlight the visual cues, and slowly build in the sound effects using only the tracks that I find necessary.

From the mix position you're in every single day, things can become normalized. This is a good thing in terms of trusting what you're EQ'ing or adding reverbs to. However, if you take a walk over to the other side of the stage and listen to how it's sounding, it can sometimes be very surprising!

Don't overthink it too much! Temp mixes can be exciting because you don't have time to sit and ponder, you need to trust your gut. Quite often, these are ideas that will stay through the course of a final mix.



Nicole A. Fletcher

Any side project outside of my normal work in animation is stepping out of my comfort zone. Even though I've seen a lot since my start in reality TV, with every new project, you never quite know what you're going to get. Sometimes the production audio is great, but usually it needs some love and there's never one catch-all way to approach a scene. Every

time I take on a passion project, independent film, or documentary, through all the struggles (and the "What the ****?" when there's nobody around), I learn something new and exciting.

For me, the best ways to be inspired are panel discussions such as CAS or MPSE events, networking mixers, listening to other industry members' stories, watching new shows, and being out in nature and new places in the city.

Ken S. Polk CAS

To get motivated on a project that may look very labor-intensive, pressure-filled, or a subject matter I'm unfamiliar with, I remind myself that editing, sound design, and mixing is like playing with a giant chemistry set. What you can do with it involves not only creativity, imagination, and psychology, but it can also be very gratifying ... and even fun!!! This self-

reminder is usually a great motivator and inspiration for me to get out of my comfort zone and "go for it."

Here's one example I learned from my years in the music business. A longtime composer friend had just finished shooting a two-night stand at the Chicago Opera Theater of a rock opera he wrote which contained a 65-piece orchestra, six-piece rock band, 10-person choir, and six lead characters. He asked me to mix down the event in all the existing multi-formats for theatrical, DVD, and streaming.

I got the drives, which had 135 tracks of just music, and copious pages of specific notes describing how he envisioned the mix should evoke in each scene. After setting up the session, I tried multiple times to just get a rough mix to see what would be entailed for any of his specific scene concepts. After two hours, I had nothing I felt was suitable for what I thought he wanted and what I thought it should be. I went to bed that night disheartened and frustrated.

I got up the next morning not wanting to give up, and it occurred to me as a last-ditch effort to do something different in approach. I looked at it as if I were mixing a rock band tune. I started with just taking the 16 tracks of drums, got a "sound/vibe" for them I liked, then the rest of the perc, then the bass, and then guitars, and got those working well. Then, I worked on the orchestra, starting with the different strings, then woods, horns, etc., and then vocals.

After slowly adding these separate "food groups" back together, what was previously insurmountable and wayyyy out of my comfort zone, turned into something the composer thought was amazing. I still use this method when working on a film or TV project, especially when it involves doing the sound design as well as the mix. By the time I'm assembling the final mix passes, whether with a full crew or solo, I'm enthusiastic and motivated to add that extra 25% to the 110% I've already put into the project!

A friend once told me: "You do your best every day, even if you don't feel it. And every day your best looks different, perhaps not what you want it to be, but know it's still your best."



FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN SOUND MIXING

MOTION PICTURES – LIVE ACTION

PRODUCTION MIXER **BRETT GRANT-GRIERSON, CAS**

RE-RECORDING MIXERS **CHRIS CARPENTER, CAS** **JOE DeANGELIS, CAS**

ADR MIXER **JUDAH GETZ, CAS**

FOLEY MIXERS **RYAN COLLISON** **CONNOR NAGY**



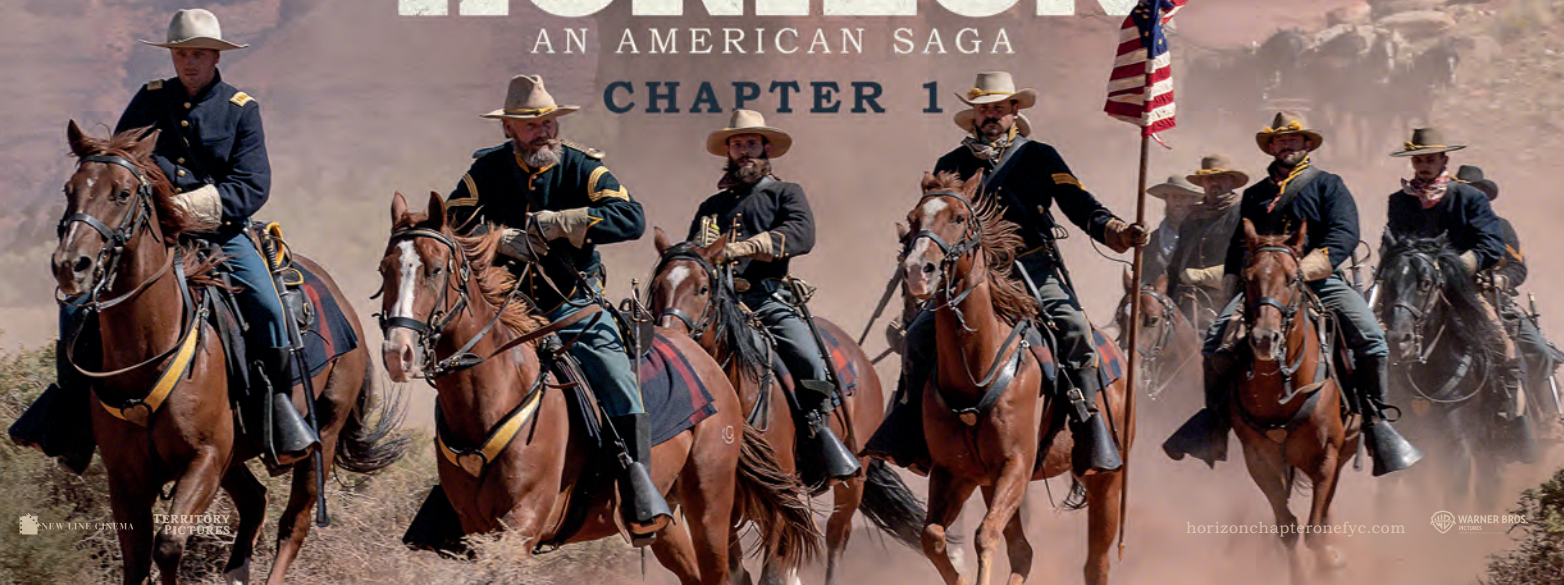
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BEEN THERE DONE THAT

Richard Lightstone CAS is back on *Criminal Minds: Evolution*, now in its third season and streaming on

Paramount+, with 1st assistant

sound Eddie Casares and 2nd

assistant sound Jennifer Winslow. This makes it the 18th year of this brand and a tribute to the work of Joseph Geisinger who mixed the full 15 years of the original.

Kevin Strahm CAS has been busy mixing the untitled Christy Martin boxing biopic in Charlotte, NC, for Blackbear/Anonymous Content, along with boom operator Levi Carter and sound utility Mitch Haigley.

Karol Urban CAS MPSE completed the mix on *Say Nothing* for FX/Hulu with Jamie Hardt and **David Di Pietro CAS**. She has now teamed up with David Tichauer on an exciting soon-to-be-announced production.

Philip Perkins CAS has been mixing the PBS docs *Making Waves: The Rise of Asian America* and *Post Atlantic: The Art of Dewey Crumpler*, along with the ballet film *Ode to Alice*.

Gavin Fernandes CAS has been busy (well, busier than the beginning of the year) finishing the third season of *The World of Gabrielle Roy*. After that, it's onto the features *Wrong Husband* and then *Space Cadet*. "Wishing you all the best through the holidays!"

Whit Norris CAS with **Kevin Cerchiai** and **Matt Thompson**, both Associate CAS members, finished a month of additional photography on *Captain America: Brave New World*. After that, Pro Tools playback operator Derek Pacuk joined the team for Disney's live-action *Moana*, directed by Thomas Kail. They finished principal photography shortly before Thanksgiving in Hawaii where Ernesto Alvarez joined them.

Amanda Beggs CAS completed a Monkeypaw Productions movie called *Him* in New Mexico with her boom op, Eva Rismanforoush, and local utility Steve Willer. Then, she immediately headed to Latvia for two months to work on Kristen Stewart's feature directorial debut, *The Chronology of Water*. Amanda worked with local boom op Verners Biters and ate a lot of cabbage

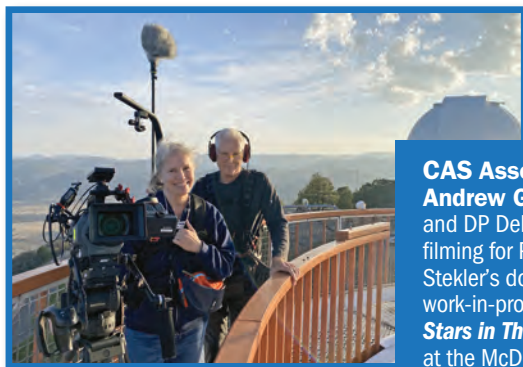
and pink soup. She's currently mixing a new Ryan Murphy show called *All's Fair*, where she reunited with Eva as her boom and Yisel Pupo Calles as her utility, with the entire cast remarking on the rarity of an all-woman production sound team.

Steve Weiss CAS begins production on *Suits: L.A.* with Ron Wright on boom and Natasha Fagan handling the utility chores. It's great after the long dry spell.

Charles Dayton CAS MPSE shares, "I'm currently working on my 10th season of *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* and recently finished a documentary on a triage hospital on the front lines of the war in Ukraine called *Heroes of Hope*. I also recently finished mixing a found-footage horror film called *House on Eden* with sound supervisor Kunal Rajan. As Co-chair of the CAS Events Committee, I'm particularly proud of our Sounding Board v4.0, our out-of-town screenings of *TRON* in Vancouver and *Baby Driver* in Atlanta, our in-town screening of *The Abyss*, and our CAS Picnic. Thanks to everyone for their hard work in making these events happen!"



THE LIGHTER SIDE



CAS Associate Andrew Garrison and DP Deb Lewis filming for Paul Stekler's documentary work-in-progress, *The Stars in Their Eyes*, at the McDonald Observatory.

Daniel Vasquez V. CAS received the Colombian Academy Award (Macondo Awards 2024) for Best Sound for the film *Ruben's Bolero*. He shared the award with Sebastian Alzate (co-supervising sound editor and re-recording mixer) and Jaime Cujaban (production mixer).



Amanda Beggs CAS, Eva Rismanforoush, and Steve Willer in New Mexico on the movie *Him*.



The Sound Department, David Raymond, Cara Kovach, and **Scott D. Stolz CAS**, in between setups on the Fox backlot during production of Season 8 of *9-1-1*.

Adar Stolz (daughter of **Scott D. Stolz CAS**) meets with a prospective boom operator. Photo: Merav Stolz





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