

Journal of the
CINEMA AUDIO SOCIETY

"Dedicated to the Advancement of Sound"

1999 Emmy Winners for Sound Mixing

Primetime Emmy Awards were given at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium in the 52 Creative Arts categories on Saturday, August 28th. Awards were given for the period of June 1, 1998 through May 31, 1999, by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences in the 51st Annual Awards ceremony. The winners in the Sound Mixing category are:

- OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A VARIETY OR MUSIC SERIES OR A SPECIAL -

• **The 41st Annual Grammy Awards** •

Production Mixer:
 Edward J. Greene
 Audio Mixers:
 John Harris
 Don Worsham
 Randy Ezratty
 Audio Sweetening:
 Robert La Masney

- OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A COMEDY SERIES OR A SPECIAL -

Ally McBeal
 • **Love's Illusions** •

Production Mixer:
 Paul Lewis
 Re-Recording Mixers:
 Peter R. Kelsey
 Nello Torri

- OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A DRAMA SERIES -

ER

• **The Storm - Part 2** •

Production Mixer:
 Marc A. Gilmartin
 Re-Recording Mixers:
 Allen L. Stone
 David Concors
 Michael E. Jiron

- OUTSTANDING SOUND MIXING FOR A DRAMA MINISERIES OR A MOVIE -

• **The Rat Pack** •

Production Mixer:
 Felipe Borrero, C.A.S.
 Re-Recording Mixers:
 Michael Casper
 Dan Leahy

Emmys in 27 other categories will be presented on Sunday, September 12th in a live broadcast from the Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium. The other nominated shows in the four Sound mixing categories were as follows:

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NOTEWORTHY

Cinema Audio Society holds DVD Meeting

A general membership meeting of the C.A.S. was held on Wednesday evening, August 18th at Warner Hollywood Studios. Entitled "DVD Audio Mastering - From the Dubbing Stage to Your Home," the meeting traced the path of a mix from A/D conversion to its final delivery as a DVD disc.

Presented in the form of a panel discussion, the meeting was moderated by Tomlinson Holman. The panel consisted of Jerald Cole - Manager of Digital Compression Operations for California Video Center, Phil Jamtaas - a DVD Mixer for Warner Hollywood, John Kellogg - General Manager of Multi-Channel Audio & Music Production for Dolby Labs, Steve Thompson - Technical Advisor for Pacific Ocean Post Sound and Managing Director of Cinram/POP DVD Center, Larry Walsh - a DVD Mixer for Universal Studios, and our generous host and Vice-President of Post Production Services for Warner Hollywood Studios - Robert Winder.

Warner Hollywood also offered tours through their new DVD mastering rooms, as well as several other stages.

In the process of mastering DVD, the across-the-board policy was to change the track as little as possible. Pops, clicks and dropouts are

Continued on page 19

Sound Awards Expand to Fourth Category

The Board of Directors of the Cinema Audio Society has voted to establish another category for its annual awards for Outstanding Achievement in Sound Mixing. At the next Awards Banquet in March 2000, Sound Mixing awards for 1999 will include a new television category for Variety or Music Series or Specials. In the past, these programs had been included in the Mini-Series and Movie of the Week category. There will now be four award categories: Motion Pictures, Television Mini-Series and Movies of the Week, Television Variety or Music Series or Specials, and Television Series.

Upcoming C.A.S. Meeting

"Production & Post Production - Assumptions, Assumptions, Assumptions" is the title of an upcoming C.A.S. General Membership meeting to be held October 21, 1999 at Universal's Hitchcock Theater. A panel of production and re-recording mixers and moderator Larry Blake will address such issues as the use of EQ on production, multi-track production mixing and its uses in post production, and communication between production and re-recording mixers.



The Following Are New Members Inducted into The Cinema Audio Society in 1999:

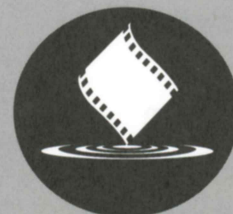
ACTIVE:

Kevin Burns
Michael Casper
Emmanuel Clemente
Kathleen "Pud" Cusack
Ross Davis
Robert W. Edmondson
William Freesh
Scott D. Harber
Richard S. Hart
Tom Johnson
J. Stanley Johnston
Peter R. Kelsey
Shirley Libby
Michael Liotta
Lawrence Loewinger
James W. Machowski
Mathew Price
Ronald Scelza
Brad Sherman

ASSOCIATE:

Omie Craden
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Benjamin Ing

The Cinema Audio Society is also pleased to announce our newest corporate sustainer:
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A Sound Idea

The Rationale Behind the Position of "Sound Designer" and Why it Never Took Hold

by Larry Loewinger, C.A.S.

"There is no separation of state between the production microphone and the loudspeaker in the theater. It is all one act."

- Richard Portman, 1998 recipient of the Cinema Audio Society's Career Achievement Award

Portman's words point to an ideal unity in film sound. In reality, however, a soundtrack is created by a team -- a production mixer, post production sound supervisor, sound effects editor, composer and re-recording mixer, to name just a few -- that often resembles a patchwork rather than a unified chain of command. Unlike cinematography, there is no one person who sits at the top of the pyramid. But what if there were?

There was a time, in fact, when the making of a movie soundtrack appeared to be heading in this direction. This was back in the 1970s when one solitary, but powerful, figure in the post production world tried and failed to introduce the position of "sound designer." By the late '90s sound design has come to mean something smaller, a little less reputable, and even a tad controversial.

Today there are a variety of interpretations of what "sound designer" means. In many cases, the term makes professionals queasy.

"It is a controversial term," admits

Gary Rydstrom, one of the reigning gurus at George Lucas' Skywalker Ranch and someone who can wear this title more comfortably than most. "Some people started using it and then stopped. It's a cross between someone who makes sound effects but also supervises the soundtrack. It is someone who the director turns to as being in charge of the soundtrack. It sounds damn pretentious."

Skip Lievsay, co-founder of C5, one of the larger postproduction sound facilities in New York, narrowly defines the term: "If you are making sounds that you can't record and have to create, you are a sound designer."

For veteran production sound mixer Chris Newman ("The English Patient"), sound design connotes something different. "It is the way the space of the movie will sound to the audience," he says.

This idea -- "the way the space of the movie will sound" -- was the notion that animated the pioneer of sound design, Walter Murch, some 25 years ago. Murch occupies a singular place in feature film post production, having acted as both picture and sound editor, as well as re-recording mixer. He has been the director's eyes and ears for a small but seminal group of films, starting with Francis Ford Coppola's "The Rain People" (1969) and running to Anthony Minghella's "The English Patient" (1997). In each of these films, sound has been used subtly

and evocatively to create texture and meaning.

"I am unique," Murch proclaims, "in that I am the only film editor who is also a feature film mixer. I both edit the picture and come up with a concept for the sound and then mix the final result. I have been doing this since Francis Ford Coppola's 'The Conversation' in 1974." At the mix, he explains, "I balance the original dreams of the director, the needs of the studio, my own hunches about things, and the voices of everyone else working on the film."

"From the late sixties at Zoetrope, we were trying to create the sound equivalent of a director of photography -- somebody whose responsibility it was for the total sound of the film."

Murch had hoped that his work on "The Conversation" would lead to the creation of a sound designer credit on future films. And at the time it appeared that Murch, with his already impressive track record of Coppola films, would blaze a path that others would follow.

But he remains an anomaly in the film business. No one else at his level cuts picture and mixes sound. No one else has his orchestrating abilities. Quite likely, no one else inspires the same kind of confidence among world-class directors. But he remains a solitary figure, a veritable cottage industry on the outskirts of the film

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TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

by Ed Somers, C.A.S.

Stereo Headphone Monitor Box

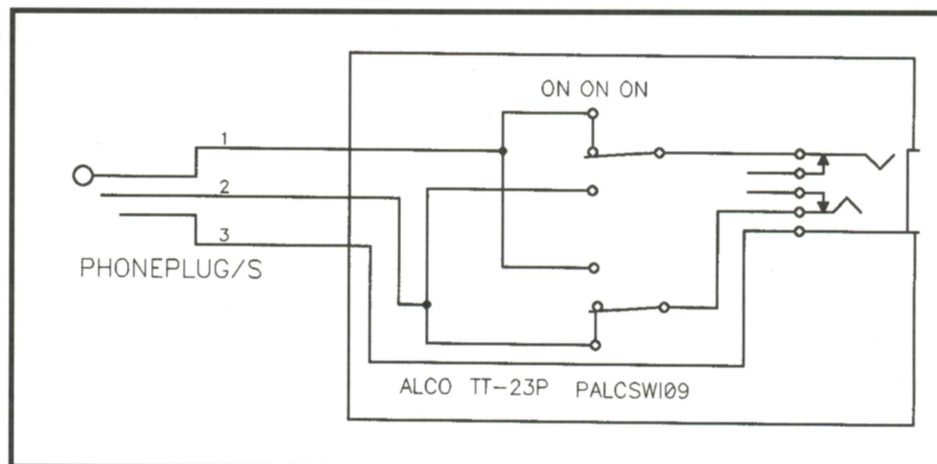
Have you ever been in that situation where you have a stereo recorder and you want to plug in just one microphone, then you realize that with your stereo headphones you will only hear the audio on one side? This is a rather common problem in field recording.

One solution is to dedicate a headset and replace the connector with one that is wired with the drivers in parallel. No doubt this is not an appealing idea. Another solution on headsets that have the removable 1/4 inch adapter on the connector is to get another adapter and bridge the tip and ring with solder to accomplish the same thing.

As this is rather hard to do yourself, I have a little construction project that solves this problem rather elegantly. It is a Left/Right/Stereo switch. It requires a small box with the switch, and a 1/4 inch stereo phone jack wired to a short cable with a stereo phone plug.

The trick to this project is the special toggle switch that is used. It is called a DPDT ON-ON-ON toggle switch. DPDT stands for "double pole double throw". The ON-ON-ON switch is specially connected internally to make the Left and Right connections.

The Alco part number is TT-23P and is available from most electronics parts stores. Location Sound Corporation sells it for \$9.85. ♦



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Tinnitus -- *A Noise Within*

by James L. Sheehy, M.D.

Tinnitus (noise in the ear or head) is a symptom, not a disease. And we are hearing that it will lead to deafness (extremely unlikely); that it could be due to a tumor (possible—but unlikely); that it is due to an inner ear infection (possibly, but not without many other symptoms); and, finally, that there are many ways to “cure” it.

Believe it or not, everyone hears head noise (tinnitus) at times. NO? Just listen carefully (in a quiet room) and swallow; you will hear “clicking”—it happens every minute, all of your life, but rarely gets to a conscious level!

Block both of your ear openings with a finger from each hand; if you do not hear a “rumble”, that is amazing. Or bite your teeth together very strongly and tightly close your eyes; notice a “rumble” in your ears?

So what does all this mean? It means that there is internal information coming into the brain all the time—but it does not get up to a conscious level. This is true with outside noise also. Noise from the icebox or an air-conditioner or a fan, or a light rain on the roof, is usually noticeable when it starts but then is not unless you focus attention on it, or the noise (icebox, etc.) stops.

Interestingly, there are other internal messages that do not get to a conscious level either, unless attention is focused on them. You do not usually feel your shoes on your feet; or your watch on your wrist; or the ring on your finger; -- unless it is called to your attention; -- and then

you do! Those messages are coming in all the time but are blocked by a mechanism called habituation: the method by which the nervous system reduces or inhibits responsiveness during repeated stimulation.

Why do some people have so much trouble with tinnitus? Fear or anxiety plays a big part. That is why it is important to understand the mechanism and demystify it. That is why it is also important to see an ear specialist (otologist) to “check things out.” This is very important if the tinnitus is only in one ear and there are other symptoms from the ear (hearing loss, pain, drainage, and dizziness).

On the assumption that the tinnitus is not an indication of a tumor or infection or any other treatable problem (that is true 99% of the time), what is causing it to be such a major problem? The answer is STRESS--and there are five different types: C A P P E¹:

- Chemical Stress: Excess coffee or excessive aspirin or (at times) side effects from some other medicine you are taking.

- Acoustic Stress: Noise input or exposure -- very loud or prolonged.

- Pathological Stress: Hearing loss, and there are many types, believe it or not. People whose ears become blocked with wax usually have tinnitus -- when it is removed, the tinnitus goes away.

- Physical Stress: Run a one hundred yard dash and then notice that you may very well be hearing the blood (heart beat) through your ear.

(A large artery goes through the middle and inner ear and pumps blood 60-100 times a minute all your life. You may hear this when you lie down, particularly if you have an illness or a fever.)

- Emotional Stress: Anxiety and/or depression are the common causes for tinnitus to become noticeable, or for it to become worse in a person who has noticed a little bit, now and then, for a long period of time.

So -- everyone has some head noise, but usually it is not noticed until something else enters the picture. It may at times become disabling. Solving the problem involves understanding tinnitus and demystifying it, and understanding the stress factors: C A P P E.

It is indeed mind-over-matter. Sometimes psychological help is needed for tinnitus habituation. Tinnitus retraining therapy, antidepressants or antianxiety drugs may be necessary.

For more information contact the American Tinnitus Association at (800) 634-8978 or the House Ear Institute at (213) 483-4431 or via e-mail at <http://www.hei.org>

James L. Sheehy, M.D. is an ear specialist at the House Ear Clinic, Los Angeles that is affiliated with the House Ear Research Institute.

¹ Adapted from an article by Richard H. Nodar, Ph.D. in *The International Tinnitus Journal*



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Interview with Ed Bernds - Part 1

- A Chat with the Recipient of the 1998 C.A.S. President's Award -

by Mark Ulano, C.A.S. and Mark Rozett, C.A.S.

For the past year, the C.A.S. Journal has run excerpts from sound pioneer Ed Bernds' new book "Mr. Bernds Goes to Hollywood." His fascinating story about the infancy of motion picture sound recording has led to numerous questions and inquiries from our readers. Production mixer and film sound historian Mark Ulano, C.A.S. and re-recording mixer Mark Rozett, C.A.S. had a few questions of their own about those early days, and set out to find some of the answers from the very articulate Mr. Bernds.

The interview got off to a quick start as Ulano was fastening a lavalier microphone to Mr. Bernds' collar in order to record the discussion.

EB: Will a lav mic give good quality?

CAS: Yeah.

EB: When I was a mixer, I used to be prejudiced against it. I thought it was poor quality compared to the mic that's out in front.

CAS: I tend to go with an overhead mic or boomed mic for the most part, but in this situation I just wanted to give us a little more isolation from the environment.

EB: I saw an ad for a shotgun mic. I presume that's a super-directional mic. That would have been a useful tool in my day. It was a great step forward when we got mics that were somewhat directional. The old condenser transmitter, the old CTA mic was not at all directional. I was



Ed Bernds demonstrates a new ribbon mike, a replacement for the "8-ball" dynamic mike (held in his left hand) to actor Joe E. Brown

looking at an old ad for it the other day that showed this great big CTA hanging down in front of a recognizable star and the caption says: "the size of a World War I aerial bomb." Size and shape, yeah. And just about the weight too, those damned things. Have you ever had one of them in your hand?

CAS: About 10 pounds, right. Eight or 10 pounds, something like that.

EB: I guess so. That was part of the recording equipment package that Electrical Research Products, Inc. (ERPI) gave us. I believe we stuck with ERPI mics all the way through. They did give us the dynamic mic, which was an improvement, and

Western Electric gave us the ribbon mic that was directional. That mic was used a great deal. Even for PA use. You've probably seen it, I guess it was a pretty good mic.

CAS: Who taught you sound when you started?

EB: We had to learn on the job. You see, people from radio had a foundation. After all, we handled microphones, we handled performers. We listened. And we fed it out into the air. So all we theoretically had to do was handle microphones, record people and music, and put it on film. The basics were there. That's why so many of the early day soundmen were ex-broadcast people.

CAS: What about the equipment you were using? Was it familiar to you?

EB: Well, it improved so rapidly. No booms at all during the UA days. Can you imagine having to hang mics? The need was so obvious. But it didn't start at UA. Even when I left UA they were still not using booms. But at Columbia, the first thing I noticed was they had a crude boom.

At Columbia there was such an emphasis on speed and efficiency. It wasn't slave-driving. It was esprit de corps. The crews were good. They knew that Columbia's survival depended on efficiency and maybe

Continued on next page

they weren't even conscious of that, but everybody worked together.

The department head was no administrator at all. He was naive. He believed everybody who got his ear. But in spite of that, we improved our efficiency greatly without any input from him. We were pretty much on our own, but that was probably good. We probably did a lot better than if we had been supervised and guided. We were on the set and did what had to be done to improve efficiency.

CAS: Did you think that was unusual at the time? That you had that autonomy, that freedom?

EB: I didn't know. We were pretty insular. We knew that as a mixer, if you were fired or something, you didn't have much chance of hooking on with any other studio. Each studio thought they had the best and they'd hire low level guys, cablemen, but even mic men tended to stay where they were. Now in camera, a good cameraman would be in demand at any studio. I had great credits at Columbia, but I didn't kid myself. I knew that if I went . . . if something happened and I had to look elsewhere, I wouldn't have a hell of a lot of luck.

CAS: Why do you think that difference was there?

EB: Oh, I don't know. Maybe because cameramen had more prestige than mixers. From time to time I used to talk to mixers that said we're the equal to cameramen. We're the head of sound, they're the head of camera. We should get as much money and have as much power. Well, it just didn't work that way.

CAS: So there was no conversation or point of contact for the sound people from studio to studio?

EB: No, no.

CAS: Interesting. How about between the production sound people and the post-production sound people.

EB: Well, in the beginning, the re-recording was done by production mixers between assignments, because heads of departments didn't realize that dubbing was highly specialized, very important.

I had my crack at re-recording. I wasn't very good at it. Some of the production mixers were even worse -- until Russ Malmgren -- he was considered one of the best in his day.

CAS: When they would re-record in those days, how many tracks were they typically mixing?

EB: Unlimited numbers, but if there were a great many, Russ invented the pre-dubs. If he had a very difficult scene -- maybe a battle -- he'd make a pre-dub of tanks, artillery fire, small arms fire, so that instead of three tracks, he had one. And of course it would be mixed according to what he saw there, which made it much simpler. You still use that?

CAS: Yes. We certainly do. How long would it take once he recorded something before he could then use it for playback?

EB: The next day I guess. We had what were called dailies. It's still the

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case, I imagine that what you shot yesterday you look at today.

CAS: Yeah.

EB: I imagine it's much simpler now with tape, isn't it?

CAS: Definitely. How many guys would be on your sound crew typically?

EB: Four. More if necessary. Mixer, mic man, recorder -- it should be "recordist," but we called them "recorder," and cable man.

CAS: The mixer did not operate the recorder?

EB: No. I never touched a recording machine. Well, first of all, I couldn't do it. When we were on location with the sound truck it wasn't engineered for that. I couldn't be mixer and a recordist. It was too complicated getting the recording machines to turn on, you know.

Nowadays, I guess a mixer can flick a switch and he's recording. It wasn't that simple. The old recording machines required more pains than that.

CAS: If you were recording on the lot, say, at UA or Columbia, was the recorder at the set there, or was it in a separate building?

EB: There was a recording building with two fixed channels and one sound truck. The fixed channels at both UA and Columbia went to upstairs monitor rooms and so everything was in underground cables. We sent it in to the recording room. It was recorded there. The amplifier

room would send us back a sample of our recording -- there was something called PEC, Photo Electric Cell. They had a tube in back of the film and it took the light, the modulated light that went through the film, impressed itself on this thing and then it was rectified and sent to us. So what we heard actually was the sound as it was being recorded.

CAS: Oh, it was a return, it returned back to you.

EB: Yeah.

CAS: So you had confirmation they were getting the signal properly.

EB: Naturally the quality was very poor -- you can imagine that the way the frequencies were diffused by going through a film. Occasionally it helped, though, if the recorder was not attentive, if the film ran out you'd hear a blast of sound.

CAS: But it was a safety, it was a protection for you.

EB: Well, Western Electric had a bunch of very ingenious guys and some of their ideas were great. The light valve was genius. The using of upstairs monitor rooms was not. The PEC amplifier had its uses. I used to switch back and forth to make sure the sound was getting through, to and through the film. It was distorted but I could switch back and forth.

CAS: Would they call that the "PEC-direct" switch by any chance?

EB: Yeah.

CAS: You know that term is still

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around. It doesn't really apply the same way, but when I started in the business, they had what they called a "PEC Direct" and it was live and tape. You could hear what was actually coming from a playback head from the mag as it was being recorded.

CAS: What was the procedure that was used on set for you to tell your recordist when to roll the recorder? He wasn't even in the same location as you, right?

EB: We had an interphone and I gave the signal for everything to roll. Everything would be ready and I'd go dit-dit, dit-dit. That meant -- and they'd hear it on the stage -- the recorder would take that as a cue. Of course, in those days, the cameras were driven by the Sound Department, you know that.

CAS: Same motor, same AC source.

EB: No, no, no.

CAS: No?

EB: The cable had to come from the Sound Department. It was a very complex and very ingenious system, but it was very trouble-prone. The synchronizing current was fed from the recording room or the sound truck to the camera. The camera had no control -- well, they could turn it off.

As a matter of fact, the camera did have a switch to turn it off and frequently they had to because this system of being driven by the Sound Department was kind of erratic and it caused film jams in the camera. With a blimp you had to listen very carefully because it might be that the film would be piling up.

I have seen them have to take a camera out of there, get a new one and then take it to the Camera Department and with a razor blade and chisel and everything else, remove a tremendous blockage. It could actually damage the camera. You know, some of those clearances are very precise and a runaway would cause it to run backwards and cause a real jam.

As I say, the system was very ingenious, but completely unnecessary. The way they do it now, you get your sync from being on the same source of electricity, right?

CAS: Well, actually it's even gone past that. There's internal reference inside the machines. Crystal reference. And the camera has its own reference and the accuracy of both is within certain parameters so that they will be safely in sync with no physical connection or contact whatsoever between the two.

It all runs virtually perfectly. Within limits. For practical purposes, they run at the same speed. So you don't have to worry synchronizing.

CAS: But would you continue . . . you would give the signal not only for the sound to roll but that would also then make the camera roll?

EB: Well, they had no choice. They were hooked up to us. So when I dit-dit, dit-dit, everything rolled. The camera got its juice from the recording room, or the sound truck, and they only had control in the sense that they could turn it off. But the juice to turn the camera in the early days came from that elaborate synchronizing system. Boy, if you could visit an early day sound set you would be flabbergasted.

CAS: I wish I could. I'd love to be able to do that. So the first AD would say "roll it," you'd do your dit-dit, dit-dit, they'd roll and send you confirmation of speed?

EB: Yes, a single buzz from the recorder was "speed." And everybody would hear it on the mic man's intercom, and everybody would know that the camera's turning.

And then, I don't know whether I introduced it, but it was logical enough, but at the end of the scene, "da-de-da."

CAS: Morse code?

EB: Yeah. Da-de-da. I guess that was natural enough. Da-de-da. And of course everybody on the set came to recognize it. So, we'd communicate with the intercom system between the monitor booth and the set. Even when I got down to the set we used the same signals, and then we increasingly began to use the sound truck, or a third channel, and we still used those signals. And by the time I quit being a soundman, as I recall, we used the same, same signals.

CAS: Did you find yourself restricted by the limitations of the equipment in those days?

EB: I don't know. I accepted what I found, and used it the best I could.

CAS: Sounds like a good credo to live by.



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"A Sound Idea" - Cont'd from page 3
industry. (Murch lives and works in northern California, not too far from his friend, George Lucas, whose Industrial Light & Magic connotes the kind of high-tech, action filmmaking that Murch eschews.)

Sadly, the concept of sound designer -- someone who takes responsibility for the sound from beginning to end, just as a director of photography does for the image -- never took hold. Why? Was it the drag of powerful work habits? The introduction of digital technology? The long-established hierarchy of film production? The refusal of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to recognize the term? Or was it just not necessary?

One part of the answer can be traced to a transforming technology. In the early 1980's, a company called New England Digital created a machine that could sample sounds for the pop musician. Called a Synclavier, this was the foundation upon which contemporary audio facilities have been built. So powerful was it as a tool for editing sound that the manufacturer, who went bankrupt twice, was resuscitated twice.

Synclaviers can still be found in active use in audio post facilities, especially on the East Coast. C5 "evolved almost exclusively from the benefit of having Synclaviers. The Synclavier defined what we do," says C5's Lievsay.

We now take for granted the extraordinary capabilities of digital media, but 15 years ago the Synclavier was a truly revolutionary device -- the progenitor of what we now know as the audio work station. Lievsay describes a Synclavier as "an analog-to-digital converter. It stores the data

in random access memory." Using time code and a sequencer, he continues, "you can replay the data to picture. You can also manipulate the data by varying the rate at which you play it back and convert it to analog.

"In a Synclavier you have a recorder and a sequencer which tells the Synclavier when to play back the sounds. You get digital signal processing. You use digital media to manipulate the sound, to play things backwards, to speed things up, and to layer." With its keyboard, the Synclavier is operated like a musical instrument rather than a computer, which may explain the affection people still lavish on it.

"I still use a Synclavier," says Paul Soucek, one of the imaginative younger members of the sound post production community and partners

in the audio post facility Planet 10. He touchingly admits his love of the Synclavier. "It's my friend in a way a lot of systems are not." The Synclavier was like a Macintosh computer; it was user friendly before anyone knew what that term meant.

The Synclavier embodied the technology that transformed the audio landscape, marking the transition from analog to digital sound. Even at the onset of the digital era, Bernard Hayden of Sound Dimension, a boutique facility in New York catering to independents, foresaw the implications.

"With analog sound," he recently said, "you laid down one brick at a time. You had to visualize the entire building. With digital sound, you have full sight of the building all of the time." That ability to visualize a

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multiplicity of audio possibilities and keep all the elements perpetually at hand would seem to enhance the viability of a sound designer, but in a curious way, it did the opposite. Why create this all-powerful job when digital audio work stations could replace so much human labor? Why pay for a sound designer when you already have a machine and a skilled technician? The Synclavier and succeeding generations of audio work stations have produced a level of technical schematization that tended to obviate the need for a sound designer.

On a film set, sound is the stepchild to picture-making. Likewise in post, sound remains secondary to picture editing. This can be partly explained by the nature of the filmmaking process. Post production sound work comes at the end, when money is short and the pressure to release the film is greatest. With money running out, according to Planet 10's Soucek, "the insecurities set in. If you make an analogy between filmmaking and medicine, sound is in the proctology area. It is the last step in the chain."

Then there is the prominent place the composer occupies. "If I could change one thing in the way films are made," Walter Murch ruefully confessed, "I would change the way music is done. I believe a composer should be on the film from at least the end of shooting, and should be working continuously with the filmmakers during the whole post production phase."

But that is not a normal composer/film relationship. Usually the composer arrives late and leaves early. His work often plays a prominent role in shaping the final film, yet he remains

within his own domain, commonly with only a passing connection to the other sound workers. In the best of situations, the composer works in a collegial manner with the post production sound team. In the worst of situations, his work becomes one more competing element that must be resolved at the mix.

If neither technology nor work habits nor tradition have encouraged the role of the sound designer, the rise of the action fantasy film has. These films often crave unusual sounds from creatures or situations that don't exist in our ordinary world. These sounds must be composed. So instead of a sound designer being responsible for the creation of a film's sound space, as Murch originally envisioned, we have a model more in line with Lievsay's definition of someone "making sounds you can't

record" in the real world. That individual is only another technician, albeit a very important and creative one. (Significantly, Lievsay did the sound design for "Men in Black.")

Full-fledged sound design also does still occur, sometimes in unexpected ways and places. Every once in a while a film emerges, often at the margins of the business, with a "sound designer" credit attached, and one that actually describes significant work.

Atom Egoyan's Canadian film, "The Sweet Hereafter," is an example of low-budget commercial filmmaking in which an audio team was led by a sound designer (Steve Munro) working in tandem with a composer (Mychael Danna). Together they created a soundtrack that is not only striking in and of itself, but drives the

Continued on next page

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"A Sound Idea" - Cont'd from page 13
film to deeper meaning.

The film's style is illustrated by its opening sequence, a montage of scenes that crisscross time and place. As we move from past to present to future and back, sound and music are often the means by which we comprehend the temporal shifts, and constitute essential components of Egoyan's complex story-telling technique. That he achieved work of such quality illustrates how the camaraderie of Egoyan's tight-knit group manages to raise the level of each individual's effort.

As Munro says, "We [went] through the film, screening it many times and talking about it. I also like to work very closely with the composer, Mychael Danna who happens to live nearby to my studio." That physical proximity, Munro argues, heightened the creative intimacy between sound and music in the film.

"The Sweet Hereafter" is a unique hybrid of dialogue and phantasy film. "There are naturalistic, dialogue films," Munro argues, "where the sound designer title isn't warranted. But at the other extreme, with 'The Sweet Hereafter,' where the sound gets pretty funky in a lot of scenes, there is an overall concept of design and flow. If you have the opportunity to work on the overall concept as we did in 'The Sweet Hereafter' then the term is justified."

Munro's work provides a model of creativity at the periphery of commercial filmmaking. It suggests a sound design that is very forward-looking in utilizing creative and cost-saving techniques, and at the same time harkens back to the groundbreaking work of Murch in

the 1970's in its fullness and complexity. Costing no more than \$5 million, "The Sweet Hereafter" is a powerful statement about community -- both the one within the film, which is being torn apart by greed and sexual conflict, and the film production community centered around Egoyan. Its technical accomplishments are considerable, as great as anything to be found in big-budget films, and within those accomplishments reside a very important lesson.

Cost-wise, computers and digital technology -- the tools that created "The Sweet Hereafter's" soundtrack -- are available to all of us. These tools have democratized post production, so now anyone with talent or knowledge can do sound design.

But that brings us back to where we started. Why, then, aren't there more thoroughly sound-designed films like "The Sweet Hereafter?" Why aren't there more people who can legitimately call themselves sound designers and be recognized by the industry?

Maybe the answer lies in an accretion of small reasons: inertia, the reluctance of technicians to sit

under the control of a supervisor, money, the importance of MPAA-recognized credits, the absence of a powerful advocate.

Maybe a sound designer just isn't necessary. Evidently it isn't in Hollywood. But that doesn't mean it's not a good idea. Because audio work stations and sophisticated audio editing applications are available to anyone making films, the idea of a controlling audio sensibility shaping a project remains a good one. That individual, who can wear many audio hats from post-production sound supervisor and sound editor to sound designer, can play a very important and cost effective role in the making of a low budget film or video. As we saw in the making of "The Sweet Hereafter," where comity rather than conflict exists, creativity can stretch a low budget a long way.



Larry Loewinger is a sound mixer, producer and a member of the Cinema Audio Society. He was a 1997 C.A.S. Award nominee for "Stomp."

*This article first appeared in **The Independent**, the magazine of the Foundation for Independent Film and Video.*

TV Award Screenings -- Does Anyone Care?

Due to the poor attendance of the screenings of the C.A.S. Television Awards nominees, the Board of Directors is considering eliminating the screenings altogether -- unless the membership shows support for them. If you care about these screenings being continued, please write to the C.A.S. at 12414 Huston Street, Valley Village, CA 91607, or send e-mail to CinAudSo@aol.com.

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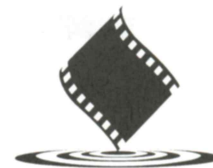
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• A Lesson Before Dying •

• Pirates Of Silicon Valley •

• The 60s •
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• The Temptations •
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Obituary

Francis Sheid was a veteran production soundman who worked on "Casablanca," "My Fair Lady" and "The Petrified Forest" among other pictures. He died June 1st in Providence, RI. He was 91. Scheid began his film career at Vitagraph Studios on Sunset Blvd in 1928. When Warner Bros. took over and moved the studio to Burbank, he moved with them and worked there until he retired in 1972.



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"DVD Meeting" - Continued from page 2

addressed, and minor compression is done only as necessary. Generally, the source material from which a DVD movie is made is the original 6-track mag. Older movies and other projects, such as music video or documentary formats, may not have a 6-track mag, and are therefore derived from various sources. The source material is transferred into a digital format and loaded into a workstation, such as Sonic Solutions. At this time, to compensate for headroom issues, the level is dropped 3 to 4 dB which will be regained when the material leaves the workstation. The track is checked for sync and any technical problems, and is conformed and fixed as necessary.

There is sometimes a shortage of disc space on a DVD for audio tracks. If enough room is allotted on the disc, there will be a 2-track mix in addition to the standard 6-track. If the mastering house has the original 2-track LtRt printmaster, they will use that. Otherwise, they fold down and encode the 6-track to create the 2-track. When only a 6-track exists on the disc, the folding down must happen in the home decoder. Therefore, the track must not only play well as a 6-track, but must also play in a reasonable fashion for those who are listening to the "down mix." This also presents specific problems with relation to subwoofer channels (LFE) and bass management. Typically a home system takes all the low frequency information below a certain point from all channels and routes it to the subwoofer in addition to the material that is already discreetly assigned to the sub channel. This additive process can result in a huge amount of low frequency material,

which then requires lots of compression. Material that is assigned only to the sub channel in the 6-track has to be addressed by the DVD mixer for "down mix" listeners with no subwoofer. With all of these issues, obviously some compromises may have to be made.

Another consideration is that most home systems are set up with the surround speakers each at a relative 0 level, while on a mixing stage, the surround speakers are each down 3dB and sum to a relative 0 level. This is another adjustment that must be made in the DVD mastering process. Also, for movies that have been dubbed into foreign languages, and/or for which there only exists a 2-track composite mix, a 6-track mix must be created from this 2-track for the DVD.

Several issues were raised regarding the viewing of broadcast material on home theater systems. One of these issues was compression. Broadcast material is often compressed in post production, then again by the network, and finally by the local station, resulting in very flat program. Dynamic Range Compression (DRC) is an option that may be available on a home decoder, with settings varying from a full dynamic range to a very limited one. This limited dynamic range setting may be desirable to some home viewers, and is sometimes referred to as a "night switch." Dialogue normalization was also discussed. Dialnorm is a setting of the audio encoder for the average level of dialogue over the length of a program. It is measured with "A" weighting. Dialnorm creates a "floating reference level" for broadcast program material, such that the average broadcast dialogue level is the same. This

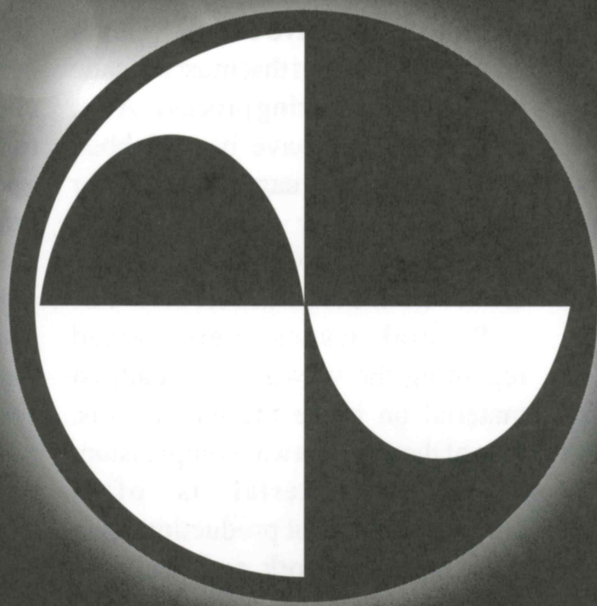
"floating reference level" compensates for the differences in the average levels of the source material and is required by the FCC to be decoded and used by receivers to set their gain. Obviously, then, it is very important to set the dialnorm correctly at the encoder.

The panelists stressed the need for communication between those involved in the technical aspects of the DVD process. It is still a relatively new and evolving technology, and the more information shared the better -- for the technicians as well as the clientele. Mixers were encouraged to talk to Directors and Producers about their DVD mix and their preparation for it. The mix is often the last time all these people are together and reasonably available (not to mention while the subject is still fresh) to put together the interviews and commentaries that are often a part of the additional material available on a DVD. It was also suggested that the Post Supervisor ask for an additional day to make a home video mix -- a 6-track and a 2-track -- with a home monitoring setup. A final thought expressed by the panelists was that we who are involved in the technical aspects of the process should equip ourselves with home theater systems so that we may hear how our work is translating into a home environment.



Thanks to by Melissa Hofmann, C.A.S. and Mark Lewer for writing this article; as well as to Tom Holman and all of the panelists for their participation and expertise. We would also like to express our gratitude to Warner Hollywood for their hospitality. It was a very informative and enjoyable evening.

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Mark Ulano, C.A.S. has completed production mixing on **"If These Walls Could Talk 2"** with Sharon Stone, Vanessa Redgrave, Ellen De Generis and Michelle Williams. Now he's on to **"Time Of Your Life"** with Jennifer Love-Hewitt, and is prepping Robert Rodriguez's **"Spy Kids"** starring Antonio Bandaras. **Bob Manahan C.A.S.** has just finished recording James Brown in Las Vegas for a DVD project titled **"James Brown in High Definition -- Live from the House of Blues."** **Lisa Pinero, C.A.S.** did the location mixing on **"South of Heaven West of Hell"** directed by and starring Dwight Yoakam. **Kate Jesse** was on the boom and **Manny Leyva** handled utility and second boom. Sound mixer **Paul Marshall, C.A.S.** is finishing **"Sacrifice"** in Mobile, Alabama. **Aletha Rodgers, C.A.S.** is mixing the new Warner Bros. sit-com series **"Jack and Jill,"** with boom operator **Gary Theard** and utility **Rob Disner.** **Carl Warner** just finished work as production sound mixer on **"Christmas Trilogy"** shot in Nashville. **Dave Fluhr, C.A.S.** and **Adam Jenkins** have finished rerecording **"Agnes Brown"** starring and directed by Angelica Huston for October films and **"Gun Shy"** starring Liam Neissan and Sandra Bullock for Disney. **Peter V. Meiselmann C.A.S.** did the location mix on **"Terror Tract,"** produced by Giant Leap Entertainment. **Cameron Hamza, C.A.S.** production mixed **"Blessed Art Thou"** which will be posted at **Skyland Sound** in Venice. Now he's just finishing up the production mix on **"The Third Wheel"** with Matt Damon & Ben Affleck for Miramax. **Douglas Tourtelot, C.A.S.** has been in Oregon this summer, doing the location mix on **"90 Days At Hollyridge"** for Hearst Entertainment with **Tom Pinney** booming, and **Ben Gross** doing utility duties. **Dennis Sands, C.A.S.** has been "gratefully" busy this summer recording and mixing the scores for **"The Magic Box,"** a 3-D IMAX movie, and **"The Green Mile."** He'll be busy this fall working on **"Stuart Little"** and also **"Magnolia."** The Paul T. Anderson film had its production tracks shot by **John Pritchett,** who is now starting on **"State and Main"** and after that **"Dr. T and the Women"** for Robert Altman. **Jay Patterson, C.A.S.,** along with **Tom Pinney** and **Keith Michalek** are on location in Richmond, VA on the CBS Miniseries **"The Memoirs of Sally Hemmings"** for Staircase Productions. **John Garrett** has been on location in Boston working on Disney's **"Fantasia 2000,"** and in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand for **"Dinner On The Diner,"** for PBS. And speaking of travelling, **Ish Garcia** will be going to Shreveport, LA to mix the **"Miss Teen USA"** telecast live on August 24th on CBS, and then in September begins his second season with **"Donny and Marie."** **Don Hale, C.A.S.** has been doing his traveling in the western states for Fox TV's new show **"Under the Helmet."** **Robert Appere, C.A.S.** and **Ed Carr** are mixing **"Felicity"** and **"Popular"** over at **Complete Sound.** **Bob Wald, C.A.S.** is just starting season four of the NBC series **"The Pretender."** He and his crew, **Jeff Erdmann** and **Jeff Norton** have been with the show since the beginning. Filling in occasionally for Wald is **Jeff Zimmerman.** **Thomas E. Allen Sr., C.A.S.** has been working on two pilots -- **"Heat Vision and Jack"** for Fox and **"Safe Harbor"** for Spelling Television. He's also doing the Fox series **"The Badland."** **Ray Collins** is the production mixer and **Scott Collins** the boom on **"Southern Cross,"** for Beach House Productions. **Tim Larkin** has just completed sound design and mix for **"Prince of Persia III"** for Mindscape. **Rob Young C.A.S.** is currently mixing the Brian De Palma film **"Mission to Mars"** for Disney with **Charlie O'Shea** on boom and **Andy Bishop** as third. **Edward Moskowitz, C.A.S.** has just wrapped the production mix on **"Annie,"** a new musical, and has moved on to **"The Opposite Sex"** for FOX/WB. **David M. Kelson** is the production sound mixer on Touchstone Pictures' **"Deuce"** in Los Angeles and also **"The Rising Place"** in Mississippi. **Stephen A. Tibbo C.A.S.** has just completed the film **"Bats"** for Destination Films in Salt Lake City. His boom operator was **George Marshall** and third man was **Brent Brewington.** **Darren Brisker** is mixing Chris Carter's **"Harsh Realm."**

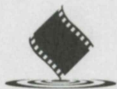
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MORE BEEN THERE, DONE THAT . . .

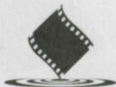
Joe Foglia, C.A.S. along with Kevin Santy and Tanya Peel is working on Touchstone Pictures comedy **"The Crew."** It's being shot in Miami with Richard Dreyfuss, Burt Reynolds, and Jennifer Tilly. Charlie Kelly is the production mixer on UPN's MOW **"Avalon."** Jon Ailetcher, C.A.S. is working on a new show for the Disney channel called **"The Jersey."** His boom operator is Gary Boatner and his cable person is Laurel Bridges. David Macmillan handled the production mixing chores on **"What Planet Are You From,"** the new Mike Nichols film which finished at the end of July. He's now starting **"The Grinch"** for Ron Howard. After completing the NBC miniseries **"The 60's,"** Kenn Michael Fuller, C.A.S. and his crew, consisting of boomman Ken Beauchene CAS Associate, and utilities Dennis Fuller and J.R. Ramalingam moved on to the inaugural season of **"Roswell."** Felipe Borrero, C.A.S. is presently working on a new TV series called **"Now & Again"** for CBS. Lee Orloff, C.A.S. has been working on **"Galaxy Quest"** with Tim Allen and Sigourney Weaver for Dreamworks, which wrapped on Friday the 13th -- "perfectly fitting for a nineteen hour day." He'll be out of town for the rest of the year on **"The Patriot"** for Columbia. Geoffrey Patterson, C.A.S. is currently mixing the production sound on **"Monkeybone"** for 20th Century Fox. Bob Deschaine, C.A.S. has finished ADR for Norman Jewison's **"Lazarus and the Hurricane"** and **"End of Days"** for Peter Hyams at Todd-AO Bundy. Alan Freedman, C.A.S. has just completed shooting ADR for **"The Crow 3: Salvation"** and **"Boiler Room"** for New Line. Sound mixer Brett Grant-Grierson, C.A.S. along with boom operators George Tyson and Jon Udell start a new season on **"Charmed"** for WB network. Philip Perkins, C.A.S. is doing both the production and rerecording mixing on the new PBS series **"Save Our Schools"** for HeartLand Media. David Barr Yaffe, C.A.S. is currently mixing the 1999-2000 season of **"Buffy The Vampire Slayer"** with Kevin Hyde and Tony Gray on the sticks. The new shooting season of **"NYPD Blue"** has begun with Joe Kenworthy, C.A.S. back on the mixer with boom operators Todd Russell and Sherrie Foster (Exposito). Mike Hall, C.A.S., assisted by Jim Slingluff, wrapped PM Entertainment Group's **"The Chaos Factor"** in August. DVD Mixer Robert Fisher is presently completing mastering work on Led Zepplin's **"Song Remains the Same,"** commentary work for **"Giant,"** and **"Pacific Heights"** for Warner Brothers. Arthur Rochester, C.A.S. has recently done the production tracks on **"Play It to the Bone,"** **"Art of the Bullet,"** and **"Inspector Gadget."** At Skywalker, Gary Summers is doing the rerecording for **"Titus Andronicus,"** and a **"Cirque Du Soleil"** IMAX 3-D film, while **"Prophecy III"** is being mixed by Gary Rizzo. Rizzo is also on the team mixing **"In Too Deep"** for Miramax, with Lora Hirschberg and Mark Berger, C.A.S. Tom Johnson is working with Hirschberg on **"Liberty Heights,"** the new Barry Levinson film, and Michael Semanick and David Parker are mixing **"Fight Club."** Jeffrey Perkins, C.A.S. and Sam Lehmer have just finished dubbing **"My Dog Skip"** at International Recording for Warner Brothers and are ready to begin Ron Shelton's **"Play It To The Bone"** with Antonio Banderas and Woody Harrelson. Klaus Landsberg, C.A.S. is currently mixing the **"Drew Carey Show"** and **"The Martin Short Variety Show."** Roger Savage has just completed final mixing of Jane Campion's **"Holy Smoke"** starring Harvey Kietel and Kate Winslet. Ian McLoughlin and Michael Thompson have completed Bruce Beresford's **"Sydney -- a Story of a City"** an Imax film for the Sydney City Council as a lead up to the Olympics. Blair Slater and Thompson have also been shooting ADR for a number of recent productions including **"Bring out the Dead,"** **"Arabian Nights,"** **"Gridlocked,"** **"Eyes Wide Shut,"** **"Lost World"** and **"Tribe."** Frank Stettner, C.A.S. is mixing **"The Beat,"** a new series for Levinson-Fontana Productions, with Jeanne Gilliland and Larry Hoff on boom, and Warren Weberg doing cable. At the newly-formed Pacifica Larson Studios, John Asman C.A.S., Sam Black C.A.S., and David Weishaar C.A.S. are gearing up for the second season of **"Seven Days,"** a UPN drama series. Marc A. Gilmartin, C.A.S. is at Warner Bros. on **"ER,"** which "takes care of his schedule until April 15th -- then there's taxes!"

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Hank Garfield, C.A.S. is finishing up production sound on **"Where The Heart Is"** in Austin with **Dennis Meehan** and **Brooke Satrazemis**. He says it's a "hot love story in hot Texas." **David Stephenson C.A.S.** has recently completed **"The End of the Affair"** in the U.K., with his boom man **Colin Wood**. Now they start **"The Golden Bowl"** for James Ivory. **Ian Voigt, A.M.P.S.** is mixing **"Leprechauns,"** a Hallmark Production. C.A.S. Career Achievement recipient **Gene S Cantamessa C.A.S.** says he's just finished a pic called **"End Of Days."** **Michael Hoffman C.A.S.** and boom operator **John Reynolds** are "taming the ocean" in a water intensive season of **"Baywatch Hawaii."** **Gavin Fernandes** is mixing the series **"The Adventures of Jules Verne"** for the summer. **Bill Reinhardt, C.A.S.** spent the summer mixing two features—**"Pinata,"** and **"The Ghost,"** which was directed by Academy Award-nominated sound editor **Doug Jackson**. **Bruno Strapko, C.A.S.** spent his summer mixing on several locations for a series of CD-ROMs for Andersen Consulting, and spots for United Airlines and Ameritech Cellular. **R.B. Goodman, C.A.S.** is prepping for **"Thirteen Days,"** a film about the Cuban Missile Crisis starring Kevin Costner, commencing production in September. **Susan Moore-Chong, C.A.S.** is back to work on season two of **"Providence"** for NBC. **Steve Payne** and **Frank Meadows** round out her sound crew. **David Hewitt C.A.S.** mixed the **"Woodstock 99"** live broadcast as well as the home video. **Greg von Buchau** has been mixing commercials with Yasmine Bleeth, Brandi Chastain and Kim Alexis. He says now he can die a happy man. **Marty Church** has been mixing the foley for **"Labor Pains," "Spanish Judges," "Newsbreak"** and **"Love & Action"** At Soundelux/Vine Street Studios, **Melissa Hoffman** and **Brad Sherman** recently completed work on **"Jello Shots"** for New Line Pictures. **Patrick Cycone** and **Michael Keller** are currently dubbing **"Villa Lobos: Tear Apart My Heart."** **Mark Weber** did the recent sound design and is preparing for the final mix of **"Rita Pigboy and Me."** At **Wilshire Stages**, mixers **Chris David** and **Terry Rodman** recently wrapped **"Chill Factor,"** for Hugh Johnson and Morgan Creek, starring Cuba Gooding Jr. and Skeet Ulrich. David also teamed up with **Leslie Shatz** to mix **"Where The Money Is,"** the new Paul Newman film for Scott Free Productions. **John Taylor, Chris Minkler** and **Gary Gorman** have just completed the mix on **"Bobby G. Can't Swim."** **Harry Cohen** and crew are busy designing sound for **"Cherry Falls," "BATS"** and the IMAX film **"Dolphins"** for mixers **Ken Teaney, C.A.S.** and **Marshall Garlington.** Garlington and **Marc Fishman** have just completed **"The Big Kahuna,"** starring Kevin Spacey and Danny DeVito. The upcoming television season brings back NBC's **"Profiler,"** and UPN's **"Secret Agent Man"** to mixers **Mike Olman, C.A.S.** and **Liz Sroka**, who just completed the feature **"My Brother the Pig."** In August, **Ken Teaney, C.A.S.** and **Olman** will final **"Happy, Texas."** At EFX, **Eric Thompson C.A.S.,** is currently shooting ADR and foley on Neil LaBute's **"Nurse Betty,"** and along with **Sean Kennelly** and **Chris Staszak** has completed the ADR and or foley on the **"The Big Kahuna," "Seven Girlfriends,"** and **"Sinbad, Beyond The Veil of Mist."** **Glenn Berkovitz, C.A.S.,** is "day-playing on location successfully," with **"Drew Carey"** in Cleveland, **"Livelyhood"** in Minneapolis; and then soon to take on the series **"MYOB"** home in L.A. **Richard Branca, C.A.S.** from Sony Pictures Studios reports that **Kevin O'Connell** and **Greg Russell, C.A.S.** are finishing up with **"The Story of Us"** and are then on to **"Hanging Up."** **Paul Massey** and **Doug Hemphill** are preparing for **"Stuart Little,"** while **Bill Benton, Jeff Haboush** and **Greg Orloff** are currently completing **"Blue Steak."** **Sherry Klein, C.A.S., Bob Edmondson** and **Joel Fein** are gearing up for the return of **"Dawsons Creek," "Manchester Prep"** and **"Once & Again."** After doing the rerecording mix on the VH1 **MOW** **"Sweetwater,"** **Rusty Smith** and **Bill Freesh** are starting the TV season with **"The Simpsons," "Chicago Hope"** and **"Early Edition."** **Jon Taylor, Carlos DeLarios** and **Tony D'Amico** are currently working on **"Party of Five," "Baywatch"** and **"Time Of Life."** And finally, **Peter F. Kurland, C.A.S.** and **Steve Bowerman, C.A.S.** are the production sound team on **"Legend of Bagger Vance"** in Savannah, GA



*"Been There, Done That" would like to hear about the projects you've been mixing lately.
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