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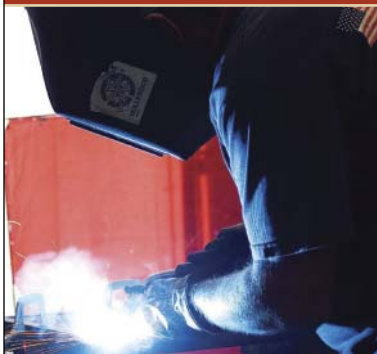


**COVER: COWBOYS & ALIENS** Production Designer Scott Chambliss writes: "Illustrator James Clyne and I developed this major set element early on. Although the finale sequence changed significantly afterwards, this large-scale alien gold-mining machine concept became the design language arbiter for all things alien-manufactured, down to Jake's wrist blaster. This is a SketchUp® and Photoshop® drawing."



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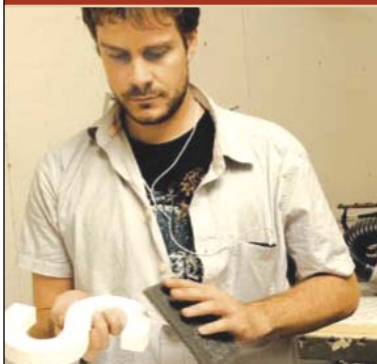
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JOURNAL OF  
 THE ART DIRECTORS GUILD  
 August – September 2011

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**PERSPECTIVE** ISSN: 1935-4371, No. 37,  
 © 2011. Published bimonthly by the Art  
 Directors, Local 800, IATSE, 11969  
 Ventura Blvd., Second Floor, Studio City, CA  
 91604-2619. Telephone 818 762 9995. Fax  
 818 762 9997. Periodicals postage paid at  
 North Hollywood, CA, and at other cities.

**Subscriptions:** \$20 of each Art Directors  
 Guild member's annual dues is allocated  
 for a subscription to PERSPECTIVE.  
 Non-members may purchase an annual  
 subscription for \$30 (domestic), \$60  
 (foreign). Single copies are \$6 each  
 (domestic) and \$12 (foreign).

**Postmaster:** Send address changes to  
 PERSPECTIVE, Art Directors Guild, 11969  
 Ventura Blvd., Second Floor, Studio City, CA  
 91604-2619.

**Submissions:**  
 Articles, letters, milestones, bulletin board  
 items, etc. should be emailed to the ADG office  
 at [perspective@artdirectors.org](mailto:perspective@artdirectors.org) or send us  
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Website: [www.artdirectors.org](http://www.artdirectors.org)

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## FAIR IS FAIR

by Michael Baugh, Editor

The Art Directors Guild, like all other unions and most professional societies, is supported by members' dues, paid by them to keep the Guild's operations afloat. The ADG dues are low when compared with similar unions. Its one-percent-of-scale rate, in place for Art Directors since 1973, is half of what United Scenic Artists members pay in New York; but even a low dues rate can be a burden sometimes.

This is a difficult period financially for many of our members. The economy's downturn hasn't just impacted house carpenters and government workers. Film and television artists, too, have seen their work evaporate, blown by tax-incentive winds to distant, less expensive locations. The days when our members could count on working fifty weeks a year (or even forty...or thirty) are behind us. Some of our members are struggling through these times, barely making an annual income that puts them above the federal definition of poverty.

A few others, more talented or more driven, or perhaps just luckier, are earning several hundred thousand dollars each year, placing them squarely among America's more highly paid employees. And there are, of course, many members in between these extremes. Clearly the recession hasn't impacted everyone equally. Last year the Guild, as an organization, showed a profit. It took in more dues and initiation-fee money than it spent...not by a lot, but six or seven percent still adds up to a reasonable amount of money. This doesn't happen every year. There have been periods when the Guild closed its books in the red, forced to draw down its savings in order to continue to provide member services.

Selling off capital assets to support current expenses is a road to financial ruin. Even the United States Congress realizes that...I think. As part of an ongoing examination of dues policies, designed to make them consistent across all of the branches of the Guild, last year's modest surplus has led the Board of Directors to ask how best to deal with a windfall in this inclement financial climate. A recommendation has been made to the Board to reduce dues for all members from its (somewhat) historic rate of one percent of scale to perhaps eighty percent of the current amounts. It sounds attractive. Who wouldn't want their dues reduced? But it's not really a lot of money for a working member, about the cost of dining out once every three months.

To be fair, some members need dues relief more than others. I believe a better use of this temporary surplus would be to relieve the burden in more meaningful amounts on those members who are in difficulty. There is no reason to reduce the dues of a Production Designer making a six-figure income, especially since the current dues levies are more than fair. There is substantial reason to provide relief to a Set Designer who hasn't been able to find work for six months, or whose medical bills will soon result in bankruptcy. And I must restate that surpluses do not occur every year. The year before last, the Guild was forced to sell investments to pay the staff.

I urge the Board to act conservatively, to retain our eminently fair dues rate of one percent of scale, applied equally across the board, and to structure a dues relief plan for members who demonstrate extended unemployment, large unreimbursed medical expenses, or other financial catastrophes. There are lots of models of how such a plan might work. Other guilds have implemented several of them, and I have confidence that our elected Board members can find a fair and effective plan. The level of this relief can be adjusted annually to use any surplus that may be available without jeopardizing the Guild's ability to provide important services. We don't need to lower dues for everyone. Fair is fair.



**This editorial page reflects, as it always does, my personal opinions. I have been a member of the ADG for more than forty years, and for nearly a quarter of that time I served as the Guild's treasurer. I believe I have as thorough an understanding as any member of the organization's financial position, its fiscal strengths and weaknesses. I am using this month's column to urge the Guild's Board to be financially conservative and to use the Guild's resources for the greater good of its membership.**

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# from the president

## LEADERSHIP, VISION AND THE ADG

by Thomas Walsh, ADG President

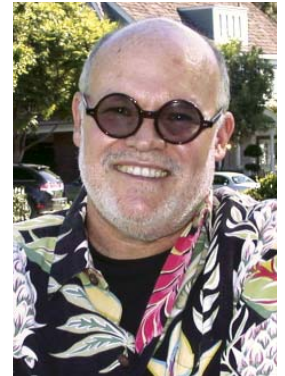
Whether we like it or not, our profession is now—and probably will be forevermore—a global one. I was recently reminded of this while participating in a series of dialogues and lectures with the faculty, administrators, students, and media professionals at the University of Nottingham in the UK. This University's department of Culture, Film and Media, with three major campuses in Nottingham England, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and another one outside of Shanghai, China, is positioning itself to become a major hub for advanced learning and research in all aspects of media communications, production and publications.

I was invited to participate in this dialogue because the Art Directors Guild is regarded by the University as an influential world leader within our industry, and (although we are not the only organization that represents narrative designers and film artists) we represent the single largest group of such professionals in the global film and television industry. With this influence comes a significant responsibility, one that requires us to lead by example in our pursuit of evermore enlightened policies, standards and professional practices. At this critical time in our Guild's history we cannot permit fears and suspicions to divide us and make us prisoners to petty differences. Most importantly, we must continue to exercise and advance our most unique gift—our imaginations—which permit us, in the words of Production Designer and Illustrator Harold Michelson, "to look at nothing and see everything."

The ADG, especially since the advent of our website, casts a long shadow, one which now extends around the globe, and we cannot retreat or become fearful of our shadow. We must rise to the occasion and exercise our influence both nationally and internationally within all sectors of our industry and union affiliations. As we continue to reimagine and advocate for new internal programs and policies we must accept the fact that these endeavors all come at a financial price and that price is fair and one worth paying when the responsibility is upon us to perform as leaders within our profession. We must renew our dedication to provide assistance to our members most in need of our compassion and support, but if we pursue financial policies that are shortsighted and contrary to our better interests, we will abdicate all of these serious responsibilities.

As the ADG now enters into its seventy-fifth year, we must continue to renew and re-chart our course as leaders and innovators within the narrative arts. I am continually reminded that our members are still one of the best-kept secrets within our industry. It is ironic that we are more highly regarded outside of Hollywood than within it. But Hollywood's continued dominance over our industry is both fluid and waning, especially with the explosion of new and quickly evolving social media and digital distribution networks. We have made great gains advancing our visibility over the last ten years by tirelessly promoting our profession and our artists, but much more still needs to be done. Now is certainly not the time to undermine our gains and turn inward, to eliminate or reduce many of our signature programs and pursuits. We must remain the strongest advocates for the advancement of our own creative interests. If we don't continue to blow our own horn and raise our own flag on behalf of our profession and our members, you can be assured that no one else will!

We have entered into a new workplace paradigm, one that requires all of us to work more creatively and interdependently with one another. The fulcrum of our future is centered on new and sensible applications of technology combined with our ability to use our unique visions to see what cannot be seen, to imagine what cannot be imagined. But at this pivotal time we must not take for granted or retreat from our responsibilities as acknowledged leaders and innovators within our global profession and industry.



# contributors

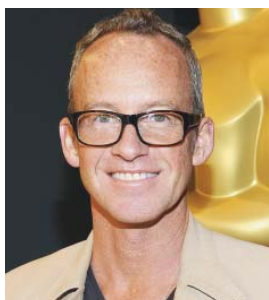
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**Jim Bissell**, the Art Directors' representative on the motion picture Academy's Board of Governors, and the moderator of the series of seminars profiled in this issue, is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a BFA in theater. After working in New York and Los Angeles on commercials and low-budget features, he won an Emmy Award® in 1980 for his work on *Palmerstown, U.S.A.* followed by a BAFTA nomination for Production Design on Steven Spielberg's *E.T.: the Extra-Terrestrial*. He later reunited with Spielberg on *Always* and *Twilight Zone*. Bissell is also known for his collaboration with director George Clooney, including *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*, *Good Night*, and *Good Luck* (for which Bissell received an Oscar® nomination), and *Leatherheads*. Other Production Design credits include *300*, *The Rocketeer*, *Someone to Watch Over Me*, and the upcoming *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol*.



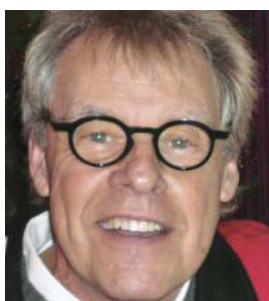
**Bill Brzeski** received his undergraduate degree from Miami University and an MFA in design from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Originally interested in designing for ballet and opera, he began his career in theater before moving to Los Angeles from New York City and designing more than eight hundred episodes of television series. Brzeski collaborated with Rob Reiner on *Flipped* and *The Bucket List*, and lent his talents to an eight-month shoot in China on *The Forbidden Kingdom*. He also received an ADG Award® nomination for Todd Phillips' 2009 Golden Globe-winning comedy *The Hangover*. Brzeski also designs commercial spaces, most notably the award-winning Susina Bakery in Los Angeles. His Production Design workshops at graduate and undergraduate levels have been hosted by USC School of Cinematic Arts, Miami University, Clemson University, and Loyola University Film School.



Upon receiving his master's degree from Carnegie-Mellon University in theater set and costume design, **Scott Chambliss** was invited by his design hero Tony Walton to work in his studio in New York. Becoming disenchanted with the business of Broadway, Chambliss signed on as a film Assistant Art Director, learning the craft under the robust tutelage of Patrizia Von Brandenstein, Stuart Wurtzel and Wynn Thomas. A promotion to Production Designer on the first of many creatively satisfying but commercially invisible features ultimately led him to believe he had no future in film. At a fortuitous moment, though, he bumped into J.J. Abrams, and his dream of a deeply satisfying director/designer collaboration began to take shape. Chambliss, a published author and illustrator, is the grandson of a North Carolina rum-runner and an Eastern Oregon logger. To those who know him, this will come as no surprise.



**Jim Hewitt** was born and raised in Hanford, California, and graduated from California Polytechnic University in Pomona with a bachelor's degree in architecture. A college internship led to contacts in the industry and he became involved with a visual effects house. Early projects included working as a Set Designer for Universal's *Islands of Adventure* in Florida and Universal Studios: Japan. Over the years, he segued into live entertainment, television and feature films and has worked for many talented Production Designers and Art Directors; he considers himself lucky to have worked under the very best. Hewitt continues to fulfill his creative streak, outside of work as a Set Designer, by building furniture on his honey-do list in his home woodshop and producing the next two *Visual Sourcebooks* in his series based on recent month-long trips to China and India.

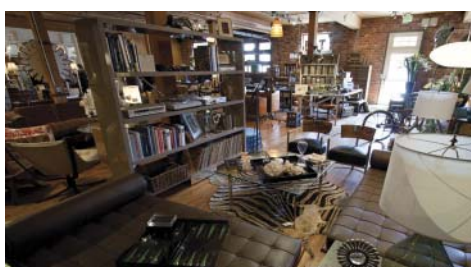
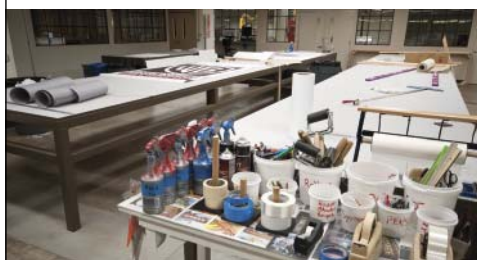
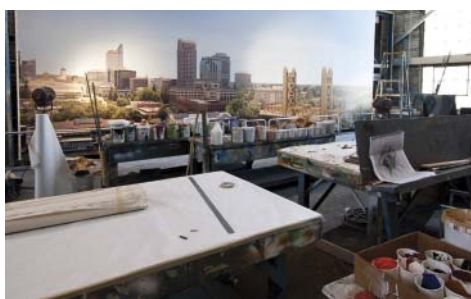


**William Matthews** is the son of a musician who grew up in Marietta, Ohio. He got his start in theater after being elected to help strike sets at Marietta College. His very rigorous high school theater work and summer stock led him to Carnegie-Mellon University. While at the University as a faculty member, he began designing projects for Pittsburgh's WQED public television station including some filmed projects for National Geographic. He has covered the full spectrum of Art Direction and Set Design in Hollywood, from episodic television to theatrical features. He was nominated for an ADG Award for his work on *Lost*. With his wife Diana, he has also had several fine arts gallery exhibitions. William has two grown children and three grandchildren, and lives in the Mount Washington area of Los Angeles nourishing a garden and three cats. His work can be seen at [www.williamfmatthews.com](http://www.williamfmatthews.com)



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# news



## **RICHARD STILES SCHOLARSHIP**

*by Lisa Frazza, Scholarship Committee Chair*

The 2011 Richard Stiles/ADG Scholarship Committee is proud to announce this year's outstanding recipient. Congratulations to Kevin Taliaferro, son of ADG member, Set Designer and Art Director William Taliaferro.

Once again, Kevin was clearly the most qualified applicant. There were close runners-up, indeed. Unfortunately, there can be only one winner. (We do permit past winners or entrants to reenter in subsequent years.)

The committee wishes Kevin, and all the applicants who applied, the best of luck in the upcoming collegiate year. Kevin is attending Wayne State School of Medicine and plans a medical career, specializing in ophthalmology. May all his goals be realized!

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## THE ADG FILM SOCIETY

by Tom Walsh and John Muto, Film Society Chairs

### DAS BOOT (1981)

Designed by Rolf Zehetbauer

On Sunday, August 21, at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood, the Guild—in association with the American Cinematheque—will screen this 1981 German epic written and directed by Wolfgang Petersen. Set during World War II, the film tells the fictional story of the U-96 and its crew, depicting both the excitement of battle and the tedium of the fruitless hunt. Oscar®-winning Production Designer Rolf Zehetbauer (*Cabaret*) brings chilling authenticity to life aboard the submarine. Two full-size mock-ups of a Type VIIC U-boat were built according to plans from Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, and director Petersen remarked of the set, that "every screw" was an authentic facsimile of the kind used in a World War II U-boat. The gimballed interior was shaken, rocked, and tilted to forty-five degrees to simulate depth charge attacks. A panel discussion will be moderated by Thomas A. Walsh.

### FRIDA (2002)

Designed by Felipe Fernandez del Paso

On Sunday, September 25, at the Aero Theatre in Santa Monica, the Guild and the Cinematheque will showcase Mexico City in the 1930s, the exotic demimonde of artists Frida Kahlo (Salma Hayek) and Diego Rivera (Alfred Molina), deftly rendered by Production Designer Felipe Fernandez del Paso. The film was nominated for Oscars both in Art Direction and costume design (by Julie Weiss). The film was shot entirely in Mexico, including three UNESCO world heritage sites: Teotihuacan, Xochimilco, and Puebla's historic centre. Replicas of the Casa Azul (Kahlo's Coyoacán house) and the RCA Building's lobby were built on Stage 4 at Churubusco Studios in Mexico City. An extraordinary crew of painters, under the direction of Lead Scenic Artist Dionisio Ceballos, created copies of Kahlo and Rivera's artworks, from sketches to murals. A panel discussion following the screening will be moderated by John Muto.



Above: Jürgen Prochnow as the Commander, called "Der Alte" by his crew, a 30-year-old battle-hardened sea veteran, who complains that most of his crew are boys, in *DAS BOOT*. Below: Salma Hayek plays Frida Kahlo in the story of the artist's dysfunctional, and ultimately tragic, relationship with the muralist Diego Rivera (Alfred Molina).



## CONTENT THEFT AFFECTS ALL OF US

from [CreativeAmerica.org](http://CreativeAmerica.org)

Creative America was formed in July to be a “grassroots organization” that will provide a unified voice for two million Americans whose jobs are supported by movies and television, as well as others in creative fields who believe “that halting the looting of America’s creative works and protecting jobs must be a national priority.”



“No matter what your job title is, whether you’re a union or guild member, whether you’re on the set or in an office, on this critical issue of content protection, we must be absolutely united,” said Debbie Uyeda, manager of Inventory Operations at Paramount Pictures. “Creative America gives everyone who cares about protecting American jobs and fostering creativity a strong new voice.”

- Websites trafficking in stolen film and television content get nearly 150 million visits every day, more than 50 billion visits a year.
- Content theft isn’t just about movies. Television shows are illegally streamed and downloaded millions of times each week.
- Content theft threatens more than two million jobs supported by the film and television industry in all fifty states and the D.C.

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**You make it. They take it. Let’s stop them.** Thieves are making millions of dollars trafficking in stolen film and television. America has already lost 140,000 film and television jobs to content theft. Wages, benefits and residuals are all being hit hard. Now there’s a way to fight back. *Creative America* is a new grassroots voice for the entertainment community and anyone else who believes America must do more to protect our jobs and creativity. **Join us. Sign up at [CreativeAmerica.org](http://CreativeAmerica.org) and make your voice heard.**

The images above and the appeal at right are from the [CreativeAmerica.org](http://CreativeAmerica.org) website.

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## WHAT UNIONS DO

by Scott Roth, Executive Director

The two most vital functions unions perform for their members are to negotiate collective bargaining agreements, and then to enforce what they've negotiated.

With respect to the first, the Art Directors Guild negotiates perhaps thirty or so collective bargaining agreements, in film, television, commercials and broadcasting. For some of these contracts, the IATSE international office is the bargaining agent, and for others, the ADG is that agent. For example, the IATSE Basic Agreement will be renegotiated next year; it clearly is the IA's agreement, and the IA is the bargaining agent. Even when the ADG bargains for our own Local issues, the IA will be in the room and, for official purposes, it remains the bargaining agent. This Guild negotiates many other agreements, however, chiefly in the broadcasting area, for both Art Directors and Scenic Artists, and in all of them Local 800 is the sole bargaining agent.

Once the Byzantine and often incomprehensible (to others, and sometimes even to ourselves) process of bargaining is concluded, then comes the fun part: enforcing what's been agreed to.

The newly negotiated agreements contain rates of pay (increased, we hope) and describe countless working conditions. If the employer doesn't pay a member appropriately or follow through on a promised term of employment, the Guild will follow through and enforce that pay or term. We do this by speaking with representatives from the offending company, and if we can resolve the matter through conversation and obtain the relief specified in the contract, all the better. But if not, the ADG will grieve and, if necessary, arbitrate the matter. This office is not shy about invoking the grievance and arbitration process.

Two areas stand out for enforcement purposes: assuring that our artists are paid at least minimum scale wages, and that industry experience roster rules are followed.

Making sure the right amounts are paid—at least the minimum scale as set forth in the contract books—is clearly the Guild's job, and in concept is easy to understand. Sometimes though what seems obvious is not so obvious to employers, who sometimes *forget* to pay that scale. This happens, for example, when members take on speculative work, which is work for little or even no money, in the hope that providing it will lead to a real, paying job. But this practice enables the employer to flout the most basic benefit a union negotiates for its members: floors or minimum salary scales for the work. So to be clear, spec work is not merely *below scale* work, it is *no scale* work. Accepting this work lowers the bar, not just for the member doing the accepting, but for all of our members. The ADG will certainly do all it can to *disincentivize* the employer from offering you spec work, but you must help by not accepting it.

With respect to fidelity to the industry experience rosters, our members have worked long and hard to be placed on those rosters. Once placed, they are entitled to preference of employment. Unless an employer can demonstrate some serious and valid reason, it may not bypass the rostered members in favor of a non-rostered individual. The office spends a lot of time enforcing the rules here to make sure, in the first instance, that hiring is done according to roster rules; and, if it is not, we will grieve and seek damages from the employer for the violation of those rules. Recently, one company violating those rules paid many thousands of dollars for the transgression; we think the company will think twice before doing so again.

Please contact me personally if you have any questions about the above.

# lines from the station point

## TRACK YOUR HOURS

by John Moffitt, Associate Executive Director



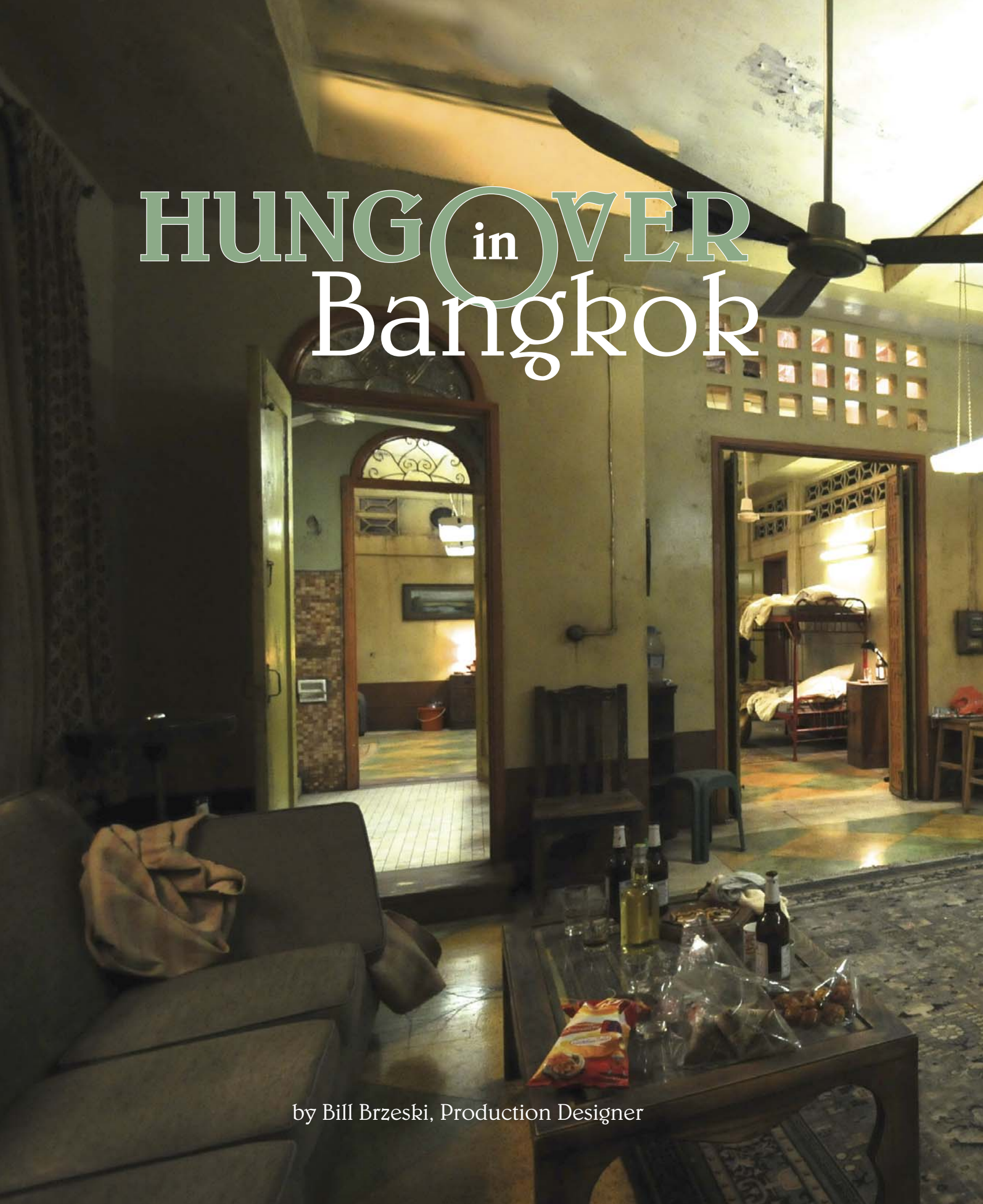
By now, I'm sure most Guild members who regularly work under agreements that provide contributions to the Motion Picture Industry Plans for pension, health and welfare are aware that they will need 400 hours reported by their employers in each six-month qualifying period, instead of 300, to remain eligible and to receive continued coverage. The 400-hour provision goes into effect on August 1, 2011, and was negotiated during the 2009–2012 Basic Agreement negotiations as a plan design change to help address a \$587 million health plan deficit for the period, without severely cutting services or instituting premium co-pays. So, it's never been more important that every hour you've worked, for which you're entitled to receive employer benefit contributions, be counted. The number of hours contributed varies, based on your classification and guarantees.

If you're employed as a Daily Hire (for example, Scenic Artists, Matte Artists, Graphic Artists, score box operators, Model Makers and Set Designers), the employer must pay into the MPI Plans the contractual amount for each hour worked in a day, including both straight time and overtime, but not less than the minimum call per the contract. Set Designers, Matte Artists and Title Artists employed under Weekly Guarantee provisions should receive contributions for no less than their minimum guaranteed weekly hours, and contributions must be made for any additional hours worked beyond their guarantee during the regular workweek. For sixth and seventh days worked in a regular workweek, all Daily and Weekly Hires receive contributions for all hours worked, but again, no less than the minimum call specified in the contract. There are no caps on contributions for these classifications.

The Art Director and Illustrator classifications, as well as Scenic Supervisors and some Title Artists, work under the Weekly On Call provisions of their respective contracts. There is a required guarantee benefit contribution of sixty hours for each five-day week worked, sixty-seven hours for each six-day week worked and seventy-five hours for each seven-day week worked. On distant location, pension and health contributions for Idle Days are seven hours for the sixth day and eight hours for the seventh day. In the case of Illustrators or Commercial Art Directors employed under the Daily On Call provision, twelve hours of contributions for each day worked must be contributed.

Going forward, members need to take the reins themselves to assure that every hour worked is paid correctly and counted toward their benefit contributions, particularly with the new 400-hour hurdle. Track your MPI contributed hours against the hours you actually worked as indicated on your pay stubs throughout the year. Keep paycheck stubs in your files for at least a year, until you are certain the hours have been reported completely. Contact MPI occasionally to monitor your contributions. A good way to track full reports of your contributions at any time is to sign on to the MPIPHP website at [www.mpiphp.org](http://www.mpiphp.org). (Remember, however, that reported hours may not be immediately processed.) Thoroughly review your annual MPI statement sent to you in April and check it against your records from each employer you've worked for during the year. Be aware of the qualifying periods and the hours you've earned, or may need, to qualify. Occasionally, employers fail to report hours or make the appropriate contribution for the classification. Even after you have tallied the required 400 hours in a qualifying period, you should insist on complete credit for the hours you've worked. Missing hours will cost you money, month after month during retirement in lowered pension payments.

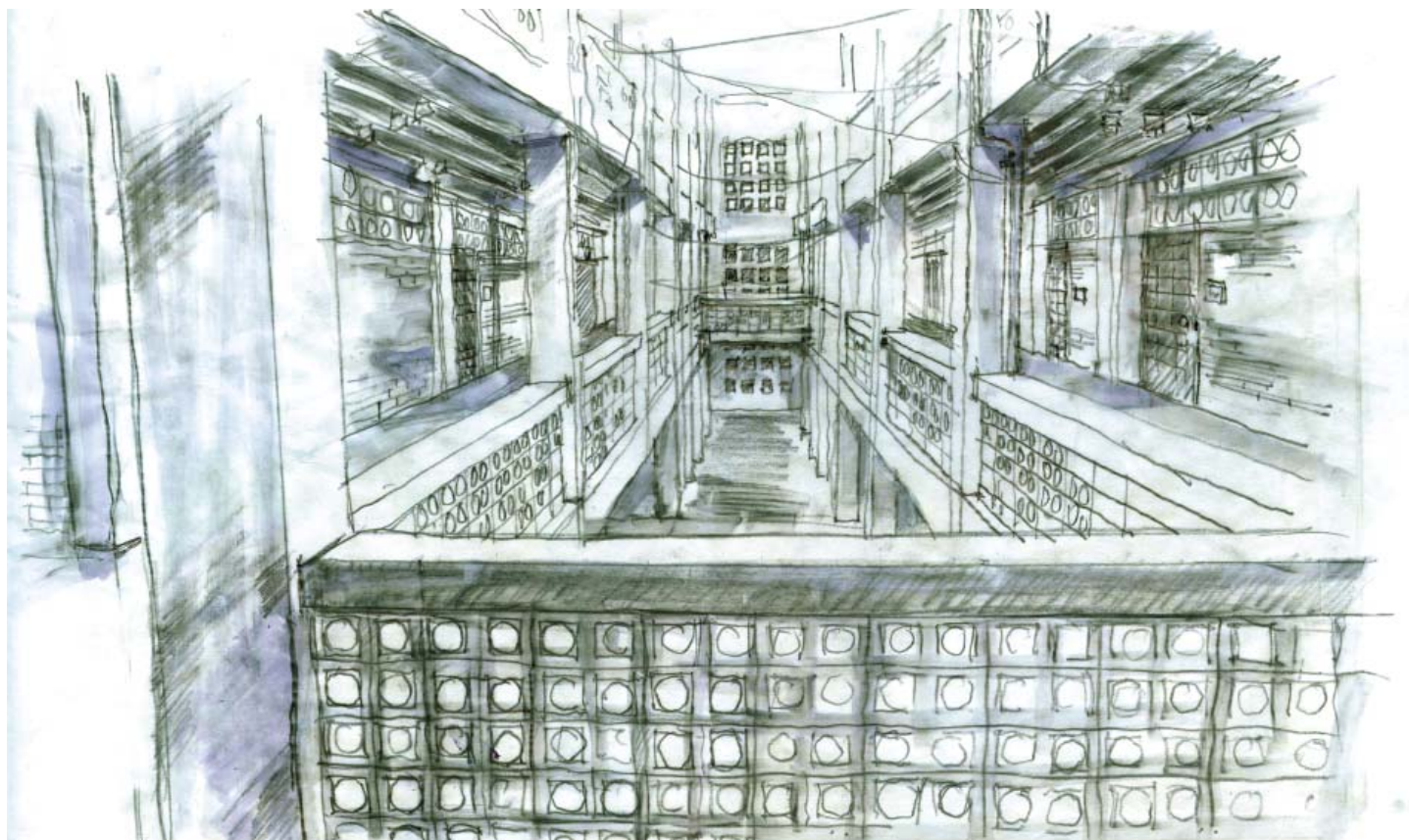
If you believe hours have been incorrectly reported or contributions have not been made correctly on your behalf, please contact the Guild. Also, if you find yourself just a few hours short of qualifying, again, contact the Guild; we may be able to help.

A photograph of a vintage Bangkok interior. In the foreground, a dark brown sofa is partially visible on the left. A wooden coffee table in the center holds several bottles, glasses, and bags of snacks. The room features a high ceiling with a large black ceiling fan. Two open doorways lead to other rooms: one on the left shows a room with a tiled floor and a small table, and one on the right shows a room with bunk beds. The walls are a light, aged color, and the floor is made of patterned tiles.

# HUNG in OVER Bangkok

by Bill Brzeski, Production Designer





**Previous page:** Construction coordinator John Samson and his crew built this rundown hotel complex on Stage 16 at Warner Bros. The photograph shows the main hotel room of the three-story set. All the fixtures and much of the dressing were imported from Thailand by set decorator Danielle Berman.

Two years after their Las Vegas episode (that was chronicled in 2009's *The Hangover*), Stu, Phil, Doug and Alan spend an evening sitting around a campfire with a few beers, roasting marshmallows and toasting Stu's upcoming wedding to Lauren. They awake the following morning in a dirty hotel room in Bangkok along with a Chinese gangster and a chain-smoking capuchin monkey. Stu has a face tattoo, and

Alan's head is completely shaven. They need to reconstruct the prior evening's events to find Lauren's missing brother Teddy who has left behind only his severed finger.

*The Hangover Part II* took the cast and crew half a world away, where the exotic location itself would infuse the story with bizarre comic material. It took director Todd Phillips a long time to formulate what





Opposite page top, and left: Two rough pencil sketches by Art Director Phil Toolin of the hotel atrium/hallway and the main hotel room. The film was shot partly in Bangkok and partly on stage at Warner Bros. Below, left to right: A set still of the atrium/hallway; a production photograph of the rundown hotel room; a set still of the bath in the main hotel room; all part of the single stage set.

he wanted to do with this film because he had a lot to live up to. Going to Bangkok helped a lot. It's the last place in the world that these guys should be, which of course, makes it the perfect place to send them.

To understand and digest this new playground, the filmmaking team took multiple research trips, even as the script was still being written. The majority

of filming would actually take place in Thailand, but Brzeski took literally thousands of pictures to help re-create parts of this unfamiliar world on soundstages at the Warner Bros. studio in Burbank.

The quintessential moment of the guys waking up—this time in a decrepit Bangkok hotel room—was the focus of a massive set, built in one of the soundstages on the lot. The hotel was modeled





**Top:** Tracing their bad behavior also leads the guys to Soi Cowboy, one of the city's most infamous entertainment zones. This sketch was done by Tammarat Sittikan in the Thai Art Department by hand-tracing over a SketchUp 3D® model with colored pencils. **Bottom:** On an alley called Soi 7/1, Brzeski and his team took over an empty storefront and built three bars and a tattoo parlor that were so real tourists tried to enter them looking for fun.

on post-war housing blocks typical of the poorest and most rundown parts of Bangkok. The hot, humid tropical climate is ever-present in that complex and historic city, and the set felt like it had been there for fifty years, neither cleaned nor maintained in all that time. The Art Department team created a minutely detailed environment atop a steel platform to represent two hotel rooms, a courtyard, three floors of stairs and an elevator. The script required the boys to wake up in one room, and then wander through the area finding clues to what happened the night before, so this environment had to do a little storytelling. The heat is oppressive in Bangkok, just above the equator. Air-conditioning solves that problem in modern hotels, but in older buildings, passive cooling was done with pattern blocks, open courtyards and ceiling fans. The script decreed that the hotel's power is off, and the pattern block, which allows light to stream in, was a useful tool to help light the set. Having all the walls leaking daylight created a wonderful atmospheric environment and natural lighting as well.

Two other sets had to be built on stage: a tattoo parlor that tied into a street exterior in Bangkok, and the backstage of Siam Sam's lady boy bar. The tattoo



parlor was especially fun because Joe, an expatriate American, ran it. It required great character, a hybrid Thai and American environment. Siam Sam's had to be built on stage because of obvious reasons, which we won't go into here. During our trips to Thailand, set decorator Danielle Berman and I brought back a myriad of items for the set dressing. We got containers and just filled them to the brim with a bunch of old electrical parts, plugs, old fans, light switches, water bottles and so on...all the frosting for the sets. On the whole, Bangkok doesn't really have a Third World feeling—it's a pretty sophisticated and lovely place—but if you dig in a little bit, you can find all the funky kinds of things we were looking for.

Once the shooting in Burbank was completed, the cast and crew headed to Thailand, where two cities served as the backdrop to the adventure. Bangkok is cosmopolitan and complex, divided into more than fifty districts that run the gamut from the towering skyscrapers of downtown to the densely populated street markets of Chinatown. Phillips hoped to convey this complexity through the eyes of Phil, Alan and Stu who were in full panic mode trying to find Teddy and deconstruct what went wrong. At the opposite end of the scale, the resort area of Krabi and Phulay Bay, where Stu and Lauren's wedding is to be held, is the epitome of serene luxury.

**Above: The construction crew torched the entire set to create the havoc and destruction from an all-night party. Only in Bangkok would they allow that. Below: The tattoo parlor and the backstage area of the girlie bar were built on stage to match exteriors that were shot on location in Bangkok.**





**Above: Another sketch by Tammarat Sittikan, also done in colored pencils hand-traced over a SketchUp model (shown below). This Buddhist monastery set was shot at Ancient Siam, a site on the outskirts of Bangkok that re-creates religious temples and artifacts. "Monasteries in Thailand are considered very religious places and we were not allowed to shoot in a real temple, so out of respect, this was the perfect alternative," Brzeski explains. "We were able to build our set onto a parking lot of a re-created Chinese temple to make it fit what Todd was looking for." Right: The SketchUp model and a production photograph of the finished set.**

Presenting the dichotomy between these two worlds was a focus of director Phillips, the entire design team, and director of photography Lawrence Sher as well. We wanted to get right in there with the characters to capture their confusion trying to navigate the frenetic atmosphere within this maze of a city. The Camera and Art Departments worked together to infuse the picture with a critical aspect of the experience: the hot, oppressive feeling you get when you land in Bangkok. Phillips relates, "Even though you can't actually feel it when you're watching the movie, the temperature is in every frame."

Thailand line producer Chris Lowenstein points out, "There are areas of Bangkok that are ultra-modern, and then you've got this old Chinatown street, which provides a wonderful contrast of textures and steam rising from people cooking on the street and just the chaos of so many humans living and working there."

Phillips adds, "Chinatown is a mini-city unto itself. We spent a lot of time in those alleys and streets, and they don't close them off for you like they would in New York or Los Angeles. They give you permission to shoot, but everyone drives through



the scene, going about their business. It's a pretty intense and interesting working environment. I loved it, but at the same time, it was really challenging."

Co-producer J.P. Wetzel adds, "I think Todd actually thrives on that chaos. He's not afraid to put these characters in unpredictable situations. He picks locations for the rawness, and what he can build there. There is so much activity with taxis, motorcycles and tuk-tuks (which are motorcycles with a seat on the back for passengers) that it's exponentially harder to work on the streets there. What we had on our side, though, is that the people are so nice and kind." Filming these sequences alone required location manager Somchai Santiitharangkun to secure permits from more than 200 jurisdictions and hundreds of shops, and also to locate spaces in a crowded city for all of the trucks and equipment required for the production.

At the end of the Chinatown chaos, the disheveled heroes rush back to the seedy hotel to find Teddy unharmed (albeit still missing a finger). The four use the gangster's speedboat (the keys for which were in Teddy's pocket), to race to the wedding, arriving just as Lauren's father is about to cancel the entire affair. Stu makes a defiant speech, affirming that life with him definitely won't be boring, and Lauren's father accepts him at last, giving the couple his blessing. **ADG**

**Right, from top: The wedding site at an exclusive resort, Phulay Bay, in southern Thailand. The set had to be barged in and was built in the middle of a huge thunderstorm. Brzeski writes, "Some of the cast and two-thirds of the crew were Thai, and we really embraced the Thai culture. We felt like we were their guests in Thailand and they were so generous to us." Below: A color elevation by Kuladee Suchatanun, again based on a SketchUp model.**





# STRANGE ENCOUNTERS

by Scott Chambliss, Production Designer

Photograph by Zade Rosenthal





**COWBOYS & ALIENS.**  
 The title says it. The plot summary confirms it: creepazoids from outer space attack and abduct townsfolk in 1870s New Mexico. The unlikely trio to save the West includes a ruthless rancher, a mysterious woman with peculiar powers, and an amnesiac gunslinger with a weird appliance permanently attached to his wrist. A menacing spaceship hovers overhead, while unnerving rumblings pulse underground. Our simple pre-H.G. Wells cow folk totally freak out.



Photograph by Scott Chambliss

**Top:** Combining traditional sketching with Photoshop® techniques, Andrea Dopaso illustrated this moment of quiet in a dying small western town, moments before disaster strikes. This drawing was the guideline in adapting the Bonanza Creek Movie Ranch in New Mexico to suit the film's storytelling needs. **Opposite page, bottom:** Special effects supervisor Dan Sudik created an enormous plow rig to simulate the crash landing of an alien speeder into the western town set. The next morning, the real thing, built by Legacy Effects, was dressed in. **Above:** The crashed alien speeder from the previous night's attack lies in state. The extras are puzzled.



**Top:** Director Jon Favreau's go-to key frame illustrator Ryan Meinerding very early on captured the mood and action of the initial alien town attack sequence in this Photoshop drawing.

**Right:** The work of American-born sculptor Lee Bontecou provided inspiration for much of the alien technology. Below: Designed to speed like a fighter jet and lasso townsfolk as though they were cattle, the Alien Speeder is one pissed-off dragonfly. This concept sketch was painted in Photoshop by James Clyne over a Modo 3-D® model by Tex Kadonaga.

Interpretation will be the key here, clearly. Will it be a Will Farrell-style comedy or a surreal *Leaving Las Vegas* Western? Bob Orci and Alex Kurtzman's entertaining script could feasibly swing several ways. Director Jon Favreau smartly invokes an unlikely pairing of opposites as his touchstones for telling the tale: John Ford's Westerns meet Ridley Scott's

*Alien*. This provocative combination inspires our attempt to create a hard-bitten noir Western with a deeply nasty space creature as the bad guy. Together, they point toward a necessary seriousness in our approach as we attempt to roll two mutually exclusive genres into one believable whole.




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**“Utah would have been an ideal location, but DreamWorks opted for New Mexico and its alluring tax-incentive cash.”**

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When you think of John Ford, the iconic landscape imagery that comes to mind is primarily located in Utah. It would have been an ideal location, but DreamWorks opted for New Mexico and its alluring tax-incentive cash. No matter how many heroic Utah images we compared with New Mexico's considerably less majestic topography, the producing studio stood firm. Money was the issue here, and it's difficult to stand on a foundation of artistic integrity with a title like *Cowboys & Aliens*. Nevertheless, New Mexico ultimately revealed some beautiful locations surrounding Santa Fe, as well as a crew of talented local filmmakers who were a great pleasure to work with.

The existing western movie town was hardly a case of love at first sight. Bonanza Creek Movie Ranch used to beautiful effect by Production Designer Andrew Menzies in *3:10 to Yuma* (see *PERSPECTIVE* April – May 2008), a 1980s fabrication created for an Italian Spaghetti Western.



The cornerstone of the town is a two-story saloon with an appropriately scaled interior, which was well maintained by the property's charming owner, Imogene Hughes. But the rest of the town hadn't weathered the years so well, and it had a peculiar problem to negotiate: viewed from the outside, the saloon loomed disproportionately large compared to the surrounding town. Nearly all of the other storefronts were built about two-third's scale to accommodate the modest height of the original Italian film's leading actor. Since this film's stars are Daniel Craig and Harrison Ford, each beautifully scaled, this was a problem. The ever-patient Supervising Art Director Christopher Burian-Mohr and Santa Fe-based Assistant Art Director Marisa Frantz oversaw the task of rescaling the environment according to my redesign of the place. We employed every perspective and rescaling trick we could come up with to avoid ripping the whole town down.

Emmy-winning Set Decorator Karen Manthey, my longtime collaborator extraordinaire, joined me once again on *Cowboys & Aliens*. She was immediately handicapped by the severely curtailed prep time of five weeks before descending on our western town, turning the job into an *Amazing Race* for the set decorating team. The studio also rather pointedly preferred that the team not build any new western set dressing, suggesting they find whatever was needed in New Mexico or elsewhere. She and her ace gang, including lead man Scott Bobbitt and assistant decorator Amanda Moss Serino, did their R&D and basically scoured the entire American



Photograph by Scott Chambliss

West in their quest. With the strong support of line producer Denis Stewart, they negotiated their circumstances beautifully and ultimately did an astonishing job of delivering richly detailed layers of life to the old western town. Karen and her partners worked tirelessly and every bit of it showed. I was blown away.

While seeking inspiration for creating dark worlds over the years, I've basically strip-mined sculptor Lee Bontecou's remarkable body of work. Her sensibility flavored the soup of source imagery I drew from

Photograph by Zade Rosenthal



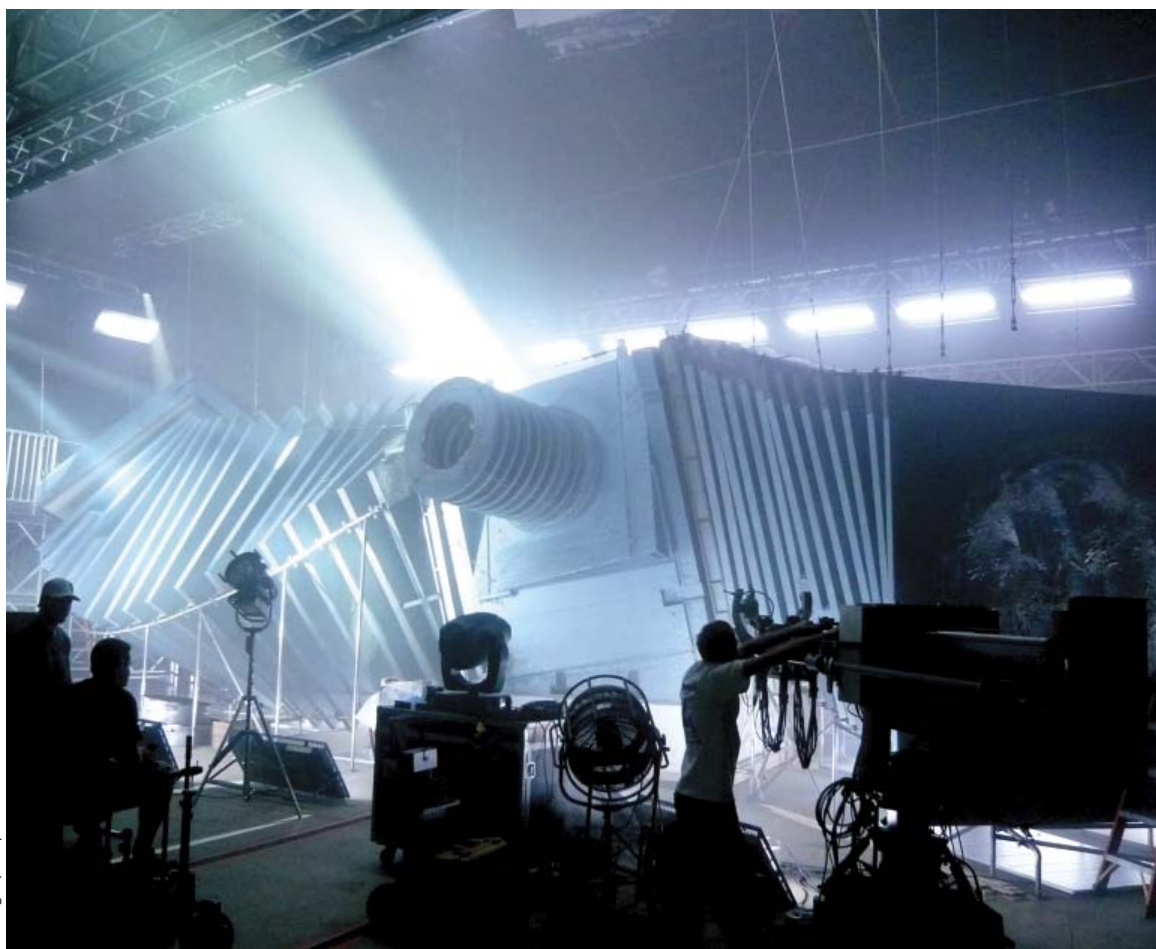
**Top:** An enormous amount of intricate detail work went into the design and construction of the Alien Speeder. Art Department gang Phil Saunders, Tex Kadonaga, James Clyne, Ann Porter, and Scott Schneider all contributed to the creation of the vehicle. Legacy Effects built two complete speeders for the film. **Bottom:** The aliens are after the cowboys again, taking a few more away with them in the process. This and several other sequences were shot on the spectacularly beautiful San Cristobal Ranch, about thirty minutes away from Santa Fe.



**Top:** In this atmospheric Photoshop sketch, Illustrator Rick Buoen captured the eerie mood of a broken-down casino in a riverboat turned on its head. The aliens found it to be the perfect hideaway, making the casino set the haunted house of this scare tale. **Above:** The completed Interior riverboat casino set was prone to heavy rain, frighteningly close electrical storms, and frequent flash flooding. Mold of epic proportions followed. Built on a soundstage at Universal Studios, many of us were convinced that the set should become its own theme park ride.

in designing dark dude Nero's Romulan ship in 2009's *Star Trek*. Once again—and for the last time, I've promised myself—I grazed on her offerings when thinking about C&A's aliens. Coherently blending western and alien genres into a visual whole was the most challenging aspect of this job from a design point of view, and if I failed, the audience would experience a series of bumps in the road each time the story moved from one genre to the other. Stylistically, I felt it was important to avoid referencing the overly sourced (H.R. Giger's output) and the expected (a predictable steampunk aesthetic). Madly talented concept illustrator James Clyne was my partner in crime on all things alien here. Adding a hefty dose of brutalist architecture to Bontecou's sculpture, Clyne and I evolved what would become the visual building blocks of our sci-fi realm. In doing so, we shared immense pleasure deciding what was right for gross-outs from another galaxy. Disgusting crusty space gunk YES. Micro-detailed visually refined technology NO. And absolutely NO alien signage whatsoever, thanks.

If NASA ever wants to sex-up their spacecrafts,



Left: As seen from the outside, Ella's Tunnel set looks like a giant cardboard accordion. It was significantly grosser inside. Construction coordinator Chris Snyder built the set's structure based closely on sculptor Jeff Frost's abstract scale model.



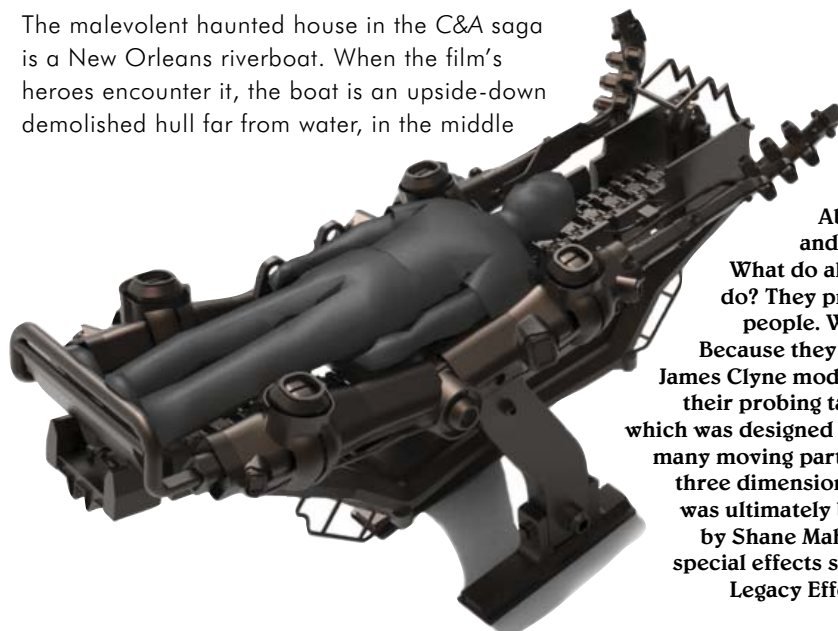
they'd be smart to hire concept illustrator Phil Saunders. Phil handled the evolution of our

**“Over the years, while seeking inspiration for creating dark worlds, I’ve basically strip-mined sculptor Lee Bontecou’s remarkable body of work.”**

marauding alien sky speeders from their early manta ray-like manifestation into what ultimately resembled a grotesque gaggle of pissed-off dragonflies. 3D modeler Tex Kadonaga helped develop the intricate surface detailing that brought the craft further into an alien visual language, while Set Designer Ann Porter made sure the whole crazy thing was buildable. The magical property-building kingdom known as Legacy, led by Shane Mahan, expertly handled the manufacture of our speeders, as well as some intricately designed alien probing tables. Having collaborated in the past

on the creation of the *Iron Man* characters, director Favreau and Mahan worked on the design of the alien together, assisted by a few ideas from me. My most notable contribution was suggesting the creature's eyes open and close like a sphincter. It's the only reason I'm sorry we didn't shoot this in 3D.

The malevolent haunted house in the C&A saga is a New Orleans riverboat. When the film's heroes encounter it, the boat is an upside-down demolished hull far from water, in the middle



Above and left: What do aliens do? They probe people. Why? Because they can. James Clyne modeled their probing table, which was designed with many moving parts, in three dimensions. It was ultimately built by Shane Mahan's special effects shop, Legacy Effects.



**Above:** Gold is the intergalactic standard of wealth in *COWBOYS & ALIENS*, and James Clyne's illustration, combining SketchUp® 3D modeling and Photoshop techniques, shows the above-ground section of the alien mining ship. The craft's overall design is based on a description in an 1865 recorded sighting of a UFO, one that was said to be shaped like a big cigar. Three scale versions of this exterior set were ultimately built: the lower fifty feet on location in the New Mexico wilderness, the upper fifty feet on the Universal back lot, and an underground section on stage at Universal as a part of an alien underground mining cavern set.

of nowhere, looking as though it had been hurled down from the sky. It had. Art Director Lauren Polizzi oversaw this massive interior set, which included the grand two-story casino, a posh saloon salon, and a captain's crib. Lauren and I approached what we were to build in two different ways simultaneously: creating construction drawings of the interiors as they would have looked freshly built and unharmed, while also creating a paper model of how those spaces would look smashed up. She toured the set twice daily with construction supervisor Dennis Richardson, crumpling and angling a wall here, knocking holes in the floor/ceiling there. The set decorating team literally broke apart and artistically thrashed all of the once-glorious period furnishings, adding layers of personal

detail along the way. By the time it was complete, our riverboat set was a disturbing place, thanks to the dizzying multiple rakes on the floor, the violent wreckage all around, and a sense that the whole damn thing was about to come crashing down on your head. (It wasn't.) With the addition of some stormy-night lightning and a heavy set-flooding downpour, this became one satisfyingly evil set. Two weeks later, when all the water trapped under the set floor turned suffocatingly rank, the set was merely evil.

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**“The heroine had to climb and slosh her way through a claustrophobic and dangerously inclined intestine, negotiating dripping space slobber and deep pools of murky muck along her way.”**

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After countless reimaginings and reworkings of the final adventure of the movie, at the last possible moment a design was approved for the grand finale: an underground alien gold-mining cavern. Sculptor Fred Arbogast assembled an impressive team of artists to sculpt the stage-filling set out of foam, while Hank Giardina and his paint posse outdid themselves devising deliciously perverse paint treatments to show the disastrous environmental effects of the aliens' mining. Together with construction coordinator Chris Snyder's ace crew, the set was completed in seven weeks, down to the wire but way ahead of the original estimate of twelve weeks, a period much more realistic for a set of that scale and detail. I hate to even mention that, because such new standards have a way of biting us on the back end down the road, but these guys—with the careful watch of Ms. Polizzi again—worked miracles, delivering that beautiful set at such an accelerated pace. I remain grateful to this moment.

The last day of shooting was on the smallest set, and I think it is my favorite in the film. It was an abstract crawl space that represented the inner bowels of an alien spacecraft. Amusingly enough, the full-scale construction imitated the techniques of Model Maker Jeff Frost's ingeniously and idiosyncratically crafted half-inch-



scaled cardboard and gesso model, all cut out panels and hardened goo held together in a sleek framework. The heroine had to climb and slosh her way through this claustrophobic and dangerously inclined intestine, negotiating dripping space slobber and deep pools of murky muck along her way. Greens' artist Randy Martens, who was a miracle worker on location in New Mexico, created a mad elves' workshop full of gruesome-looking growths to festoon the disturbing tube with. By the time we completed this queasy space, it seemed pretty clear the set could have a post-film life: as the VIP room of an acid lounge.

I may have another career on my hands. **ADG**

**Top:** The original design of the aliens' gold processor was one element of a temporary and disposable system that would be left behind once the creatures had leeched all of the available gold out of a location. They created ecological disaster everywhere they mined, and then left a ton of space trash in their wake. **Right:** Ultimately, the aliens cleaned up their act, but they still left the mechanics behind. This is the final version of their gold-processing device. Both SketchUp and Photoshop drawings were done by James Clyne.



# PRODUCTION



by Leonard Morpurgo, Vice President, Weissman/Markovitz Communications

**Above: The Production Designer's sketch often achieves the level of fine art, as witness this beautiful watercolor of Charles Howard's Ridgewood Ranch in Mendocino, painted by Jeannine Oppewall for SEABISCUIT (2003).**

Over four Monday evenings this spring, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences® presented a seminar series on Production Design in the twenty-first century that asked the intriguing question, Evolution or Revolution? Production Designer Jim Bissell and Set Decorator Rosemary Brandenburg, both Governors of the Academy for the Art Directors branch, organized and moderated the seminars, held in the Academy's Linwood Dunn Theater in Hollywood. The 286-seat theater was filled to capacity on all four nights.

The first seminar, held on April 25, dealt with the topic *The Convergence of Production Design in Live Action and Animation*. Before introducing the panelists Bissell said, "There's a tectonic shift in the way we make movies and we have these two cultures starting to collide. Hybrids will evolve, using a fusion of both. It will require tremendous reorganization in the way that we do our departments. So I think having this kind of dialog is very important. The animation houses are pushing toward a live-action look, and the live-action

# DESIGN TODAY

productions are relying more and more on animation.” Panelists that first evening included Kathy Altieri, an animation Production Designer, who showed a clip from her film *How to Train Your Dragon* (2010), Scott Chambliss, Production Designer on the 2009 *Star Trek*; Harley Jessup, Production Designer on Pixar’s *Ratatouille* and *Cars 2*, and Set Decorator Karen O’Hara, who showed a clip from last year’s *Alice in Wonderland* for which she won an Oscar®.

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**“There’s a tectonic shift in the way we make movies and we have these two cultures starting to collide.”**

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When questioned about pre-visualisation, Scott Chambliss explained that the process is different with different directors. J.J. Abrams, director of *Star Trek*, “very much likes to work with pre-vis artists, particularly to block out sequences, but neither he nor I use pre-vis to express the design. It’s not really a design tool. Other directors are different. They want designs expressed in every medium possible and that makes the Production Design job larger because you have great Set Designers, costume designers and others focusing on all the different mediums simultaneously.”

In comparing live-action films with animated films, Jessup said that he was inspired by films that the other panelists had created. “We are inspired by the great cinematographers, Set Designers, costume designers and Production Designers. There is a lot of overlap in the influence of live action on 3D animation.”

When asked where they got their inspirations, Chambliss simply said, “Life. One of the great things about this job is we have all the reasons in the world to travel everywhere.”

Altieri said that cinematographer Roger Deakins was consultant on *How to Train Your Dragon*, “So we looked at Roger Deakins films for inspiration. We



Photograph by Ivan Vejar © A.M.P.A.S.

**Above: The panel for the April 25 evening included Academy Governor/moderator Jim Bissell, Production Designer Kathy Altieri, Set Decorator Karen O’Hara, Academy Governor/moderator Rosemary Brandenburg, Production Designer Harley Jessup and Production Designer Scott Chambliss. Below: On May 2, the panel was made up of Academy Governor/moderator Jim Bissell, Production Designer Lilly Kilvert, Production Designer William Creber, Production Designer Alex McDowell, Set Decorator Beth Rubino and Academy Governor/moderator Rosemary Brandenburg.**

Photograph by Greg Harbaugh © A.M.P.A.S.





Photograph by Greg Harbaugh © A.M.P.A.S.

**Above: The panel on May 9 included Set Decorator/moderator Rosemary Brandenburg, Set Decorator Anne Kuljian, Production Designer Alex McDowell, Production Designer James Bissell, Set Decorator Jan Pascale, Set Decorator Lauri Gaffin, Production Designer Jeannine Oppewall and Set Decorator Leslie Pope. Below: The final evening, May 16, featured Production Designer/moderator James Bissell, Set Decorator Jim Erickson, Set Decorator Victor J. Zolfo, Production Designer Lilly Kilvert, Production Designer Alex McDowell, Production Designer Jeannine Oppewall and Set Decorator/moderator Rosemary Brandenburg.**

Photograph by Todd Wawrychuk © A.M.P.A.S.



months of work by the time shooting started.

The second seminar in the series on May 2 went in a different direction. Panelists showed clips from movies they had worked on for *Memorable Images: Production Designers and Set Decorators Choose Their Favorites* and then explained why they were selected. Bill Creber showed some scenes from his 1968 *Planet of the Apes*. Lilly Kilvert chose two films, *Legends of the Fall* (1994) and *The Last Samurai* (2003), while Alex McDowell talked about a clip from the 1995 hit *Fight Club*. Set Decorator Beth Rubino showed clips from two films with two very different moods—*World Trade Center* (2006) and *Something's Gotta Give*, from 2003. Jim Bissell chose a film that is perhaps one of everybody's favorites, *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, on which he served as Production Designer back in 1982.

Bissell introduced the evening's topic with these words: "With the other supporting crafts, our job is to engage the audience harmoniously and support the story in a way that feels perfectly appropriate and doesn't draw attention away from the story to the design. But every once in a while this symphony turns into a concerto and we get a chance to play our credenza, and hopefully, that's what tonight is going to be all about."

Creber explained that the last scene in *Planet of the Apes* started as a sketch on a napkin shown to director Franklin Schaffner. It became the top of the Statue of Liberty protruding from the sand at Zuma Beach (created with a matte painting) and a seventy-foot tower from which to film it. Only the torch and the back of the head were actually built. "I was told not to worry about the budget and to just build it."

Kilvert showed clips from two films shot outdoors, but in very different kinds of outdoors. For *Legends of the Fall* they built a real house that had to be sturdy enough to withstand the winds that blew across the plains of Calgary. It was shot on site, both the exteriors and the interiors. "The landscape was so remarkable that all we wanted to do was enter and allow you to see the beauty of the place." *The Last Samurai* set was built on a sheep farm in New Zealand. "It was all about finding the right location," said Kilvert. "I wanted to find a place where you could feel the remoteness and the tranquillity of this man (played by Tom Cruise) who has come through a terrible experience. All films have a heartbeat and I try to honor that heartbeat. You stop and have a look and then you go along again. One of our jobs as Production Designers is



to let audiences know where you are, so that you don't get lost."

McDowell's clip was of an extraordinary house that became a lead character in *Fight Club*. There was no description of it in the script. "As a Production Designer you develop a story for every space, every world that you build. It felt necessary to design a house that was built in the 1900s by a captain of industry. Over time, economic conditions declined and the house was rented, then abandoned, then squatted. It had been fenced in, broken into, and set on fire. There were many layers of wallpaper and paint. The house became a complex magical narrative machine because you never knew how big it is once you were inside it."

Speaking of her work on *World Trade Center*, Rubino said that it was a challenge to build the iconic one-acre site that has been so well documented. Some of the actual first responders were flown to Los Angeles from New York for the scene. "This was one of those moments where everyone on the set was deeply affected. It was like taking an egg, breaking it and putting it back together."

An entirely different experience was the house in the Hamptons, built on stage at Sony Studios in Culver City for *Something's Gotta Give*. The house was so well received, according to *The New York Times*, that after the film was released, there was a leap in the remodeling of kitchens, the sale of Sub-

Zero refrigerators, lamps and many other items featured in the film.

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**"Every single piece of architecture that we use, borrow, beg or steal has to add something to the quality of the story. If it doesn't, it's just filler and you should get rid of it. Today, we're trapped in naturalism; frequently we forget there's real poetry in these images."**

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The scene from *E.T.* selected by Bissell was of the house that was completely covered by plastic sheeting to protect the ailing extra-terrestrial. "I started thinking of the works of Christo; how he transforms landscapes to create an alternate representation of the natural world. I also just fell in love with this translucent material. Nobody had ever done this before, taken a huge piece of plastic and draped it over a house."

*Set Decoration and the Design Collaboration* was the title of the third in the series, held on May 9. Brandenburg took over hosting duties while Bissell partnered with Jan Pascale, his Set

**Above: A digital sketch by Concept Illustrator Mark Goerner of an up-shot of the Mag-Lev vehicles in MINORITY REPORT (2002), Alex McDowell, Production Designer.**



**Above: A pencil sketch by Illustrator Tani Kunataki (entirely pre-digital!) of the first space monkey recruit awaiting admittance to Tyler's dilapidated Paper Street house in FIGHT CLUB (Alex McDowell, Production Designer – 1999). This 19"x 24" illustration was done on vellum with marker inks and colored pencils. The house was built from the ground up on an existing street in an area of San Pedro, CA, that had recently been claimed as a new container port development for the Port of Los Angeles, so there was a ten block by ten block neighborhood that had been stripped of housing. The front facade was three stories tall, and the back of the house one story just to allow for entrances and exits between kitchen and the garden.**

Decorator on *Good Night, and Good Luck* (2005). Production Designer Alex McDowell was joined by Set Decorator Anne Kuljian who collaborated with him on *The Terminal* (2004) and *Minority Report* (2002), while Production Designer Jeannine Oppewall and Set Decorator Leslie Pope discussed their work on *Seabiscuit* (2003). Set Decorator Lauri Gaffin showed clips from *Iron Man* (2008) and *Fargo* (1996).

Each panelist had a different take describing how they worked together. Pope said she was “five parts psychologist, one part teamster, one part personnel manager. You are on a continual scavenger hunt.” “What I’m doing is a triage. There’s never enough time, never enough money,” explained McDowell. Gaffin said the digital world had changed so much of what she does, particularly in research and shopping. “I miss going to the store and touching things.”

McDowell said that Kuljian was focused on detail and objects, “but we spend as much time discussing color and texture and history and the environment. The process is highly collaborative.” Describing one of the most ambitious and largest sets ever designed, McDowell said that the terminal, built in an airplane hangar, was an amalgam of about fourteen real airport terminals—one in Japan, four or five in Europe and others in the United States. There were thirty different

corporate partnerships, from Borders to Starbucks. They all provided shelving, goods and signage in a very complex dance.

Bissell described another form of complexity—the black and white sets on *Good Night, and Good Luck*. He and Jan Pascale could use whatever colors they wanted but they had to be just right in the grey scale. Even stills shot on the set had to be black and white. Gaffin, Set Decorator on *Iron Man* (Designed by J. Michael Riva), described the difficulty of finding and obtaining the rights to works of art, as Tony Stark, the richest man in the world, was a collector of modern art. When preparing for *Fargo*, Gaffin had found a local artist whose work was just right, and so was the cost. However, getting clearance for the art in *Iron Man* was expensive. “There’s a very long legal trail that has to be pursued,” she said. Talking of her collaboration with McDowell, she said, “You feed off each other, help each other. You have an unspoken language when you work with someone often.”

Oppewall followed the same theme. “Working with a Set Decorator is a very personal and intimate relationship. It’s not a random collection of technical talent. It’s very idiosyncratic. We like to talk about things other than film. It makes for a better cross-pollination.”

The last of the seminars, held on May 16,

was called *The Criteria for Good Production Design*. Several of the same people took part—Kilvert, McDowell and Oppewall, with Bissell and Brandenburg again serving as moderators—and they were joined by Set Decorators Jim Erickson (*There Will Be Blood* – 2007, *Watchmen* – 2009,) and Victor J. Zolfo (*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* – 2008, *The Social Network* – 2010). Panelists showed clips from films that inspired them in their careers and discussed how they decided which films were nomination candidates for the Academy Award®.

Oppewall chose the magical world of Jean Cocteau's black and white *La Belle et la Bête* (1946). She said, in explaining her choice, "Every single piece of architecture that we use, borrow, beg or steal has to add something to the quality of the story. If it doesn't, it's just filler and you should get rid of it. Black and white is still wonderful. Today, we're trapped in naturalism; frequently we forget there's real poetry in these images." She also showed a clip from *Driving Miss Daisy* (1989), which she felt was perfect.

Erickson's picks were *Badlands* (1989) and *Gosford Park* (2001). "When I saw *Badlands*, it was the first time I thought of Set Decoration and the way it supported the story. That's what I've tried to do with my career. It's never about Set Decorating, it's about the story; how do I support that story?"

Oppewall noted, "It all has to be marching in the same direction. The whole has to be better than the parts."

And Bissell said, "When you have a great director, cinematographer, Production Designer and Set Decorator, it's difficult to know who did what. Nevertheless, you still have to nominate somebody."

McDowell chose two very different films that take place in warehouses. "At a time when we are surrounded by films with great richness and complexity and visual exuberance, it's interesting to look at design that's been pared down, where all that's left is metaphor and pure expression of story." The films were the Russian-language *Stalker* (1979), directed by Andrey Tarkovskiy, where there

is "nothing in a single frame that isn't supposed to be there" and *The Conversation* (1974), "where you could walk in off the street and have no idea you were on a film set." He said that there are many over-designed films, with good Production Designers who ignore the fact that they must serve the story.

Zolfo showed clips from three films: Baz Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge!* (2001) "exists for the Production Design and the plot is almost immaterial. Somehow it all comes together in this big carnival of excess." *The Exorcist* (1973), however, is "where realism and the naturalist movement of the 1970s is at its peak." *Bullets Over Broadway* (1994) was rich with characters and each character had an environment created specially for him.

Kilvert took the audience through two films that you knew from the beginning would end badly, *The Conformist* (1970) and *The Last Emperor* (1987), both directed by Bernardo Bertolucci. "They take us on a journey where people change and we are transformed by it as well. It is essentially the same story told in two completely different ways."

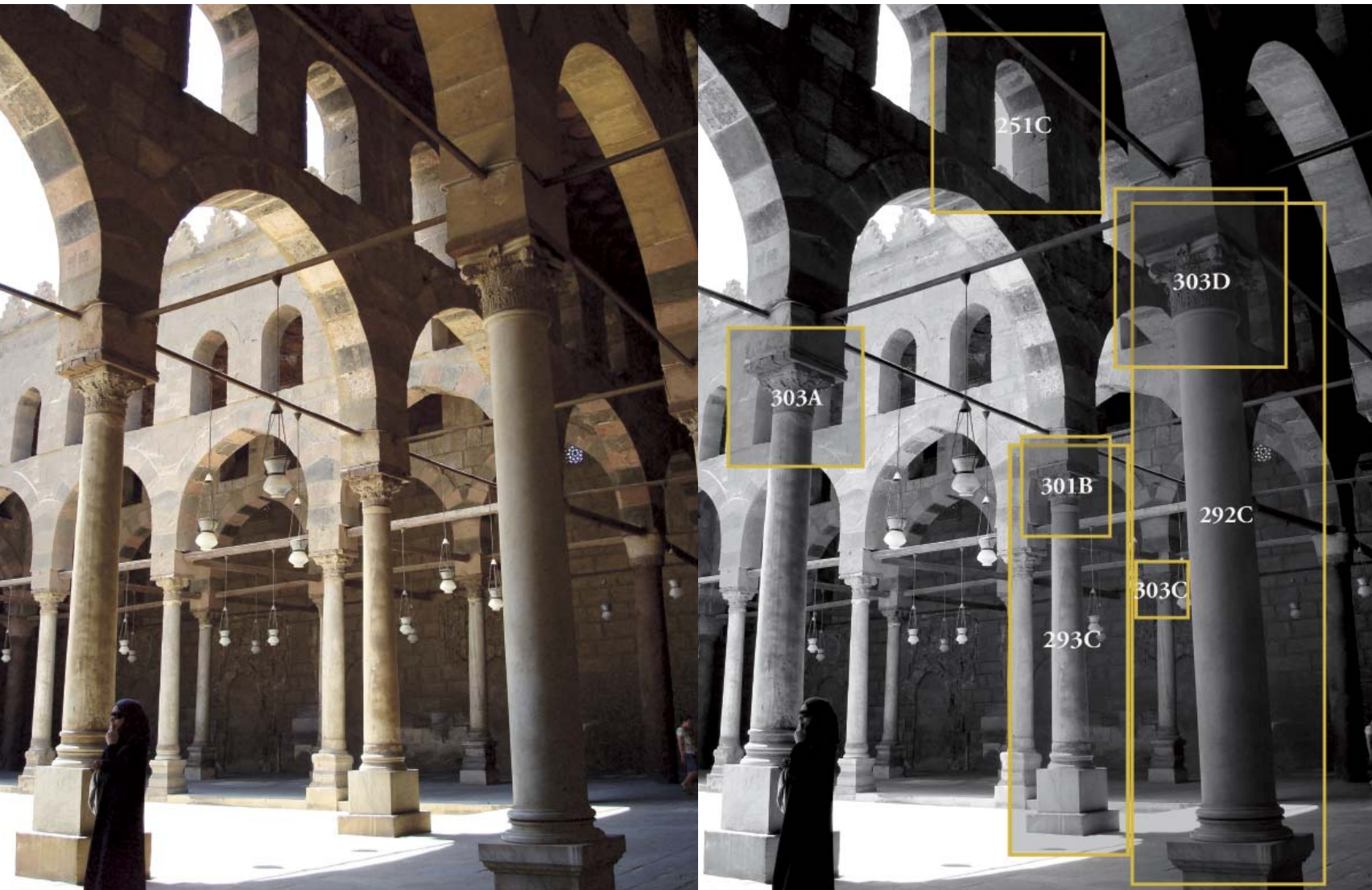
Bissell pointed out that nailing the right style was often really difficult. The final clip he selected was perhaps the most dramatic of them all. It was the scene from Kurosawa's *Ran* (1985), where aging Great Lord steps out of the burning castles as the soldiers of his two sons' opposing armies open a path for him to walk through. Bissell said, "I've picked this because it is an accumulation of what we've talked about tonight. When it all comes together like this, we see how visceral and powerful a film can be; Production Design and Set Decoration really work, and you feel you're right there at an historic moment." **ADG**

**Below: Production Designer Lilly Kilvert captured the flavor of Imperial Japan during the 1870s for *THE LAST SAMURAI* (2003) by completely transforming various locations, including an historic town in New Zealand and the backlot streets of Warner Bros. Studios in Burbank. The film tells the story of Capt. Nathan Algren (Tom Cruise), a respected American military officer hired by the Emperor of Japan to train the country's first army in the art of modern warfare.**



# EGYPT

## Visual Sourcebook



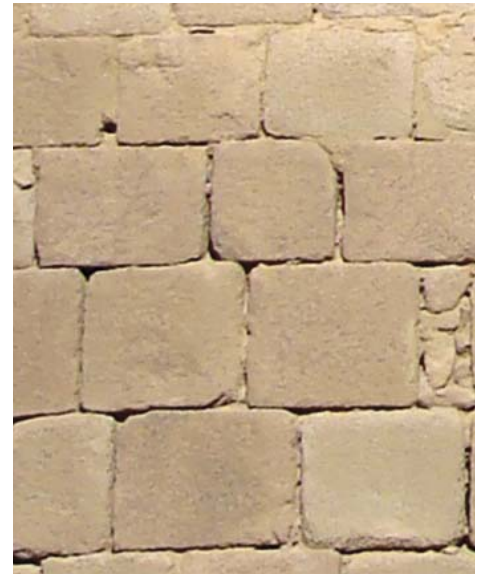
**Above:** The courtyard of the Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad Mosque, at the Citadel in Cairo. It is Mamluk (1318-1335) and shows the original Ptolemaic, Christian and Roman Columns. Along with the color photo is a key from the SOURCEBOOK showing the pages on which more detailed images can be found.

by Lisa Hewitt, Product Placement Executive and Travel Organizer

Set Designer/Art Director Jim Hewitt's first book, *Egypt Visual Sourcebook*, has just been published by the American University in Cairo Press. The book was created as a resource for Hewitt's fellow Art Directors Guild members, as well as for other architects, artists and designers. The seeds for the *Egypt Visual Sourcebook* began to germinate during an Egyptian-themed project for Universal during which Hewitt realized how limited the resources were for anything other than antiquity or hieroglyphic research. About a year later, a vacation to Egypt served as the springboard for the book he envisioned.

During three weeks in Egypt, Hewitt photographed temples, bazaars and other sights across the country. "It was fascinating how modern and ancient architecture co-exist," Hewitt describes. "There was an interesting beauty to the dichotomy."

Armed with thousands of photos upon his return, he set out to organize everything into a user-friendly guide. Originally intended as a personal reference, more than three hundred pages later, Hewitt realized the rest of the Guild would benefit from his photography as well.



Designing the book's structure took a lot of time. Beautiful but architecturally uninformative photographs were excluded in favor of others that better fit the theme of the book. A series of lengthy edits preceded submission to the Press for consideration.

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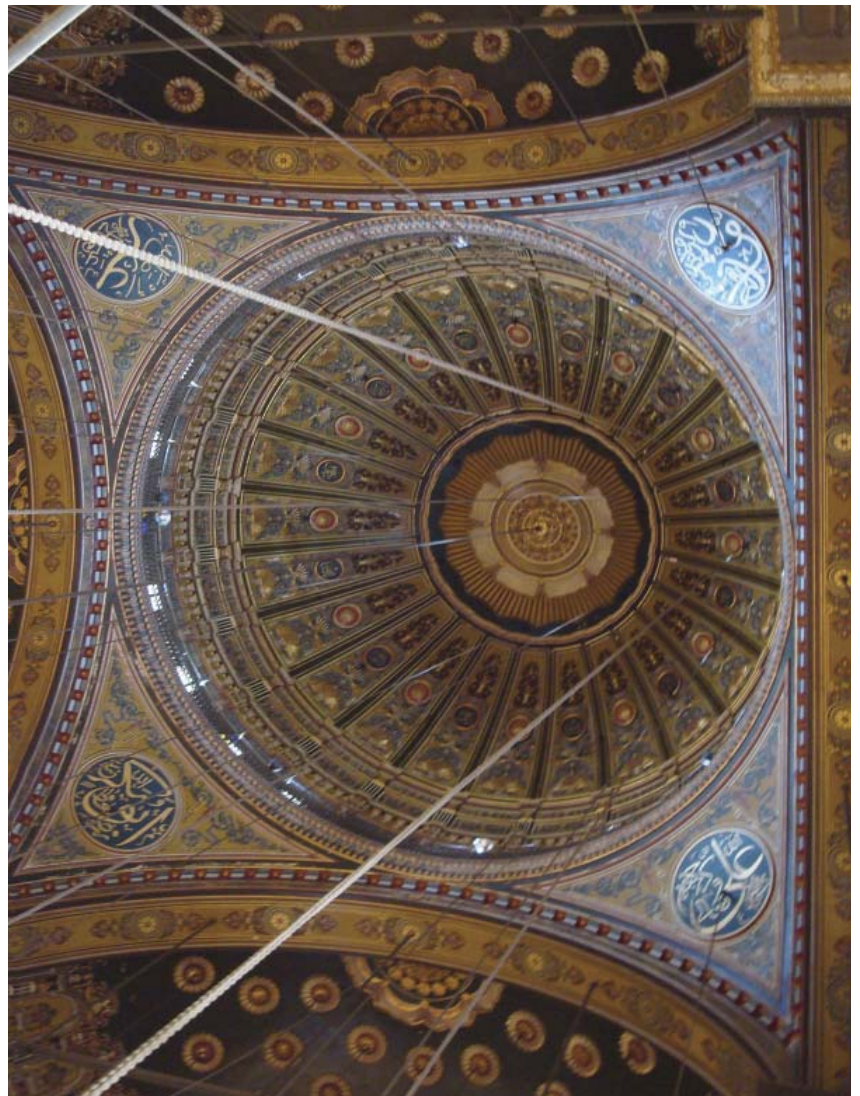
**“It is fascinating how modern and ancient architecture co-exist. There is an interesting beauty to the dichotomy.”**

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*Egypt Visual Sourcebook's* ultimate organization is based on architectural comparisons, with each element shown in its greater environment, as well as in direct comparison to others within its category.

For example, an establishing photo of a mosque cites other pages in the book where researchers can find enlarged details of elements such as archways and columns. These are cross-referenced with other pages where the individual items can be compared with others in the same category.

Everything in the book correlates to greater images of scale, proportion and orientation. “The key to the book is that you can look at macro- and micro-details at the same time,” Hewitt explains. “I think it's significant how each element fits into the overall landscape of the country, so it was important for me to express that with the comprehensive photos.”



All photographs by Jim Hewitt

**Top: Two details from the courtyard on the opposite page, along with a sample of the stonework from St. Catherine's Monastery near Mt. Sinai. Above: A view of the dome of the Muhammad 'Ali Mosque at the Citadel. It is from the Ottoman period (1832-1857).**



**Above: Traditional scaffolding between two buildings in the Street of the Tentmakers (al-Khayamiya) in Cairo. Center: A residential street in Luxor.**



Hewitt's dual sensibilities as an Art Director and Set Designer contributed to the outcome, balancing the creative with the organizational layout. "It certainly seems complicated," Hewitt acknowledges, "though it works intuitively for anyone who picks it up."

The American University in Cairo Press agreed. They fast-tracked the book for a 2011 spring release in Egypt and Europe, with a North American date scheduled for later in the year.

The revolution in Egypt delayed things slightly as military troops took over the Press' rooftop for strategic planning since the building overlooks

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**"It was really surreal reading the descriptions of what was happening in Egypt from my contacts at the Press. It was like having a front-row seat to the revolution, particularly having seen those very sites not that long before."**

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Above: A painted horseshoe arch in the Old Cataract Hotel in Aswan. Its style is Neo-Islamic (1899). Below, left: A local market in Luxor. Below, right: A charming detail from a modern residential/commercial building in Cairo.





**Above, left: Elijah's Gate and the Steps of Repentance at Mt. Sinai. It is Byzantine from the sixth century. Right: The western colonnade of the Temple of Isis at Philae. It is a hybrid of Egyptian, Greek and Roman styles (300-200 BC).**

Tahir Square where the crux of the demonstrations were located. The Press remained vigilant about staying in touch. "It was really surreal reading the descriptions of what was happening in Egypt from my contacts at the Press. It was like having a front-row seat to the revolution, particularly having seen those very sites not that long before," Hewitt says.

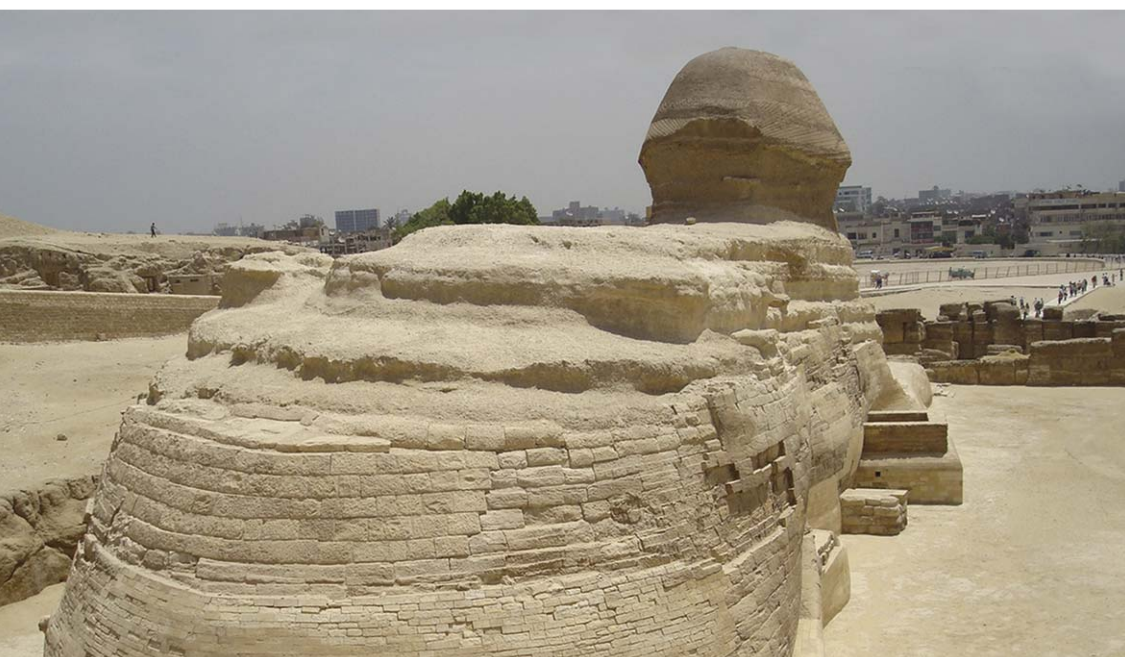
Speaking with Hewitt, it all seems like a simple process. "Oh, no. It was more complicated than it sounds," he laughs. After months of tweaking the book's structure, Hewitt submitted it for publication, targeting the American University in Cairo Press, the largest publisher of Middle Eastern books to the Western world, because the subject matter was a great fit. His original nine-page written proposal resulted in many follow-up calls before the Press made an offer to purchase the book months later.

Upon the Press' decision, the real work began. "The Press requested that I provide the name, date

of construction and historical period for each of the 1,000+ photographs," Hewitt says. "On vacation, I happily snapped pictures without knowing anything about the buildings, just photographing what looked cool. The challenge of the labeling and research seemed insurmountable."

"Chalk one up for GoogleEarth! Hewitt began searching for buildings...slowly but surely, he found each place using satellite images and then completed extensive research to find additional information."

Senior Development Editor Randi Danforth was instrumental in helping complete this tedious process as well. "In some instances, I could only find the area where the building was located, but not the actual name. Randi, in Cairo, was able to go to the spot based on my description and get the exact names and dates of construction on the local level," says Hewitt. "It was International Onstar."




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**“Chalk one up for GoogleEarth! Hewitt began searching for buildings based on the general areas where he was when he took the photographs. Slowly but surely, he found each place using satellite images and then completed extensive research to find additional information.”**

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Hewitt has a list of books he would like to complete within the *Visual Sourcebook* series. Next up are two based on recent trips to China and India, respectively. “Going on subsequent

vacations after working with the Press on the *Egypt Visual Sourcebook* certainly changed the way I travel,” Hewitt says. “On the last two trips, I’ve kept the core elements of the *Sourcebook* in mind, so I’ve photographed a multitude of details and it gives me even more flexibility for the editing process later.”

Just how many details has Hewitt photographed? On his recent trip to India, he came back with “nearly 5,000 photographs. It’s going to take a lot of time to distill those into a book. Luckily, the *China Visual Sourcebook* is near completion.”

The *Egypt Visual Sourcebook* is available through Hennessey+Ingalls in Santa Monica, **amazon.com** and other retail sellers in the United States. Final preparations are underway for Hennessey+Ingalls to host a book-signing in the fall. All Art Directors Guild members will receive invitations later in the summer. **ADG**

**Left, top and center: Two views of the Sphinx at Giza from the 4th Dynasty (2575-2450 BC). Right, top: A detail of the limestone Colossus of Ramses II in Memphis. Center: A capital with an open lotus motif from the Temple of Isis at Philae (300-200 BC).**

# My Brush<sup>with</sup> TALLULAH

by William F. Matthews, Production Designer, Art Director, Set Designer



In the summer of 1964, I was just finishing some required drawing and design courses at Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie-Mellon University) in Pittsburgh. I was adding set design to my lighting design major and this required additional art courses. As I was completing my course work, I got a call from a friend and fellow student, Harry Lynn, working at a summer theater in Maine. Most drama majors continued their education by working summer theater jobs. Harry was a director who had taken on a job as Set Designer for the

Kennebunkport Playhouse and had run into a problem getting the set lighting up to speed. He was aware of my previous summer theater lighting experience before entering Carnegie and he was wondering if I could come up to Kennebunkport from Pittsburgh to do the lighting. There were only five weeks of shows left to finish out the season. Peggy Cass was just ending her run and Jane Morgan was coming up. Tallulah Bankhead, Alan Mobray, Imogene Coca, and Billy Gray were among others slated to appear that summer. It sounded intriguing—a summer with the stars. Needing the money (the lighting designer was paid \$100 a week, plus room and board and you could get a damned good lobster roll for a buck), I piled in the back seat of a VW bug with some friends who were heading up Maine way for a vacation. The next thing I knew, we were driving into the entrance of the theater.

The theater had been converted from an old barn moved down from North Kennebunkport. It was adjacent to an old farm home, the Merrill house dating from the Revolutionary War. The dwelling was typically and quaintly colonial New England and now served as the crew's living and mess area. I was told the old house was haunted. There were lots of stories about the old place, and I'm still not sure a tap on my shoulder one night as I was sleeping in one of the big drafty bedrooms really happened. The property and the theater, including a blueberry farm, belonged to Mr. Robert Currier. The week of my arrival, *An Evening with Jane Morgan* was featured at the theater. Jane was his sister, an American chanteuse famous for her rendition of *Fascination*, who had appeared there over the years. She was one of the main reasons for the theater's success. Harry had done a great job with her set, stringing colorful sequins on black fish line against black velour draperies. I had arrived in time for the tech rehearsal, and the lighting proved to be somewhat simple in that Jane was the only performer. With some colorful pools of light, a follow spot, changing colors from strip lights on the cyclorama backing, Ms. Morgan's great gowns and voice, my first week started off easy. In fact, I met Jane's agent and future husband, Jerry Weintraub, backstage. We would meet many years later at Columbia Pictures when I

was the Set Designer on *The Karate Kid*, a film that Jerry produced.

However, the crux of this entire story is really about the following week's lighting situation at Kennebunkport. On the summer circuit in those days, a bow-tied advance director would show up at the theater representing the next week's production and outline the scenic and lighting requirements. Harry had requested me because the next week's slated production of Edward Mabley's play *Glad Tidings*, starring Tallulah Bankhead, required a special lighting setup. We were to provide specific gelatin colors: bastard amber (a theatrical term for a warm pinkish amber) and special lavender in the general lighting and footlights. The advance director had been very adamant about this. Indeed he seemed to fear that we would not be able to provide the brightness needed for Ms. Bankhead's light comedy. Her pancake makeup required footlights with alternating colors of the amber and lavender and according to him, much more fill lighting was needed than the normal package for a typical box set (a three-wall interior set), in this case a living room in a suburban house. Analyzing the situation, Harry and I became concerned with our lighting package. The theater had no footlights and was low on equipment. Harry would have to pay much more attention to finishing the set and I would therefore have a lot of work ahead of me to get the lighting in shape.

So during the week I made a plan. On strike night, after the last performance of Miss Morgan's show, I would remove the hanging strip lights and place them on black-painted two-by-fours and use them as footlights. From our kitchen in the old Merrill house, I got empty five-gallon cans and turned them into spotlights using porcelain sockets and PARS (parabolic aluminized reflectors) from the local hardware store. Strike night was always an exhausting all-night affair from Saturday night into Sunday evening, and not only did we have a new set to install but I had to make sense out of the spaghetti-like wiring system that had built up over the hurried schedule of the summer. Old cracked cable, various old pin connectors and even zip cord wrapped around pipes. It was amazing the entire dimmer board hadn't shorted out or that the entire theater hadn't burned to the ground. (More on that later.) The advance man's directives for the set also required a Dutch pink (a rosy ochre



color) with ivory trim and special bracing for Tallulah's entrance in Act I. Her contract permitted no platforms and required a ground cloth that was smoothly stretched from her dressing room all the way to center stage in front of the footlights.

With the reek of aging animal-glue binders that were added to dry-pigment paint backstage and a table saw powered by an old washing machine motor, we persevered our way into the weekend. We prepped and painted some of our set flats in the parking lot. By Saturday, the construction manager/technical director and many of the apprentices scurried through the night and into Sunday loading in the new set for Tallulah. In and around all this setting up, I balanced precariously from a rickety eight-foot stepladder, positioning spotlights. Ms. Bankhead was due to arrive at the theater Sunday evening. As Harry and I, and a few very tired apprentices, finished take-out pizza and crumpled into the front-row seats, we took a moment to reflect on our masterpiece. I signaled to the lighting board and set a general light level. I was still concerned about the advance man's request for lots of light, but we sat back exhausted, having made a valiant effort to comply with the demands for Tallulah's play.

At 6:30 PM sharp, the house-left door banged open. From our perspective in the dimly lighted auditorium there was a sharp and distinct silhouette—unmistakably Ms. Bankhead—and then in that famous throaty thespian roar came, "Where's my lighting designer?" I figured my time was finally up. I would be fired—there was no way out of this now. I feebly raised my arm as she confidently walked to my chair. I had stood up and

**Opposite page: Ms. Tallulah Bankhead was famous not only as an actress but also as an outrageous bon vivant with an infectious personality and a cutting wit. By the end of her life, she had become one of the theater world's best-known and most notorious celebrities. Her 1964 summer tour of GLAD TIDINGS was her last stage work. Above: The Kennebunkport Playhouse was housed in an old barn, purchased from the Alfred E. Burnham farm in North Kennebunkport in 1949. It was carefully dismantled and reassembled on the property owned by producer/director Robert Currier, and opened on July 5 with seating for 456. By 1965, Currier had retired and in 1971, the Playhouse burned to the ground in a mysterious fire. It was never reopened.**

must have appeared fairly pale and nervous. With a big kiss from her Vaseline lips and a frown patch taped to her brow, she explained, "I always kiss my lighting designer, the most important man in the theater! Now Dahling, let's see the lights." After an awkward silence, she motioned for a stand-in to take a position at center stage. I signaled to the lighting board and the basic lighting scheme came up. There was a long pause. She walked back a bit to the center of the auditorium. "OH MY GAWD!" Tallulah roared. I felt my blood draining quickly to my toes. My brief life in the theater flashed before me. Was it truly over? I'll never work again. Finally, she uttered, "DAHLING, it's too bright. Bring it down lower...down some more. OH PERFECT, DAHLING." With that

she mounted the stage steps and proceeded to center stage. Sitting down in the sofa facing center house she pulled a pearl-handled hairbrush out of her big floppy purse and began brushing her hair. There she held court for several more hours, with stories of the theater and the trials of being on the road. She had adjusted the lighting to a level that she could see the audience. They came to see her and she wanted to see them. I could even see why one might want to sit in the front row. She paused a few seconds to light up a cigarette and, with a large exhale, explained why she smoked Craven A, Virginia tobacco made into English-style cork-tipped oval cigarettes. And yes, she had emphysema, but she wasn't quitting now. She talked about her favorite game of baseball and how she stayed in bed till 4:00 PM watching soaps and game shows on television. Later she would need a volunteer apprentice to go home with her to be her little, as she referred to it, woodpecker, to take care of the fireplace and things in her cabin nearby. She explained how she did her makeup using a bucket of ice to tighten up her facial muscles and then applied the pancake makeup. By the way, she explained, we must call her Tallulah! In her own way, Tallulah was telling us she appreciated our hard work and that, after all the evil producers and directors, there was still some joy to be had from our hard work in the world of show biz.

As the week progressed and we prepared for our next show, the adventures with Tallulah continued.

Prior to the Tuesday-evening performance, just after she arrived at the theater, there was a huge roar from backstage. I was out in back of the theater, building some flats. In a voice like a volcano and with swearing that could put a sailor to shame, she refused to go on that night unless the box office would change its decision not to cash a check for a fellow cast member. She stood up for her supporting cast even though, throughout

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**"I was told the old house was haunted. There were lots of stories about the old place, and I'm still not sure a tap on my shoulder one night as I was sleeping in one of the big drafty bedrooms really happened."**

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the week, several actors called me aside to see if I would adjust their lighting levels. Their wardrobe colors were fairly close to those of the set walls and they were blending into the scenery. I pointed out that Tallulah had set the levels and I was not permitted to change the readings. In Act I, Tallulah arrived stage right leaning against a

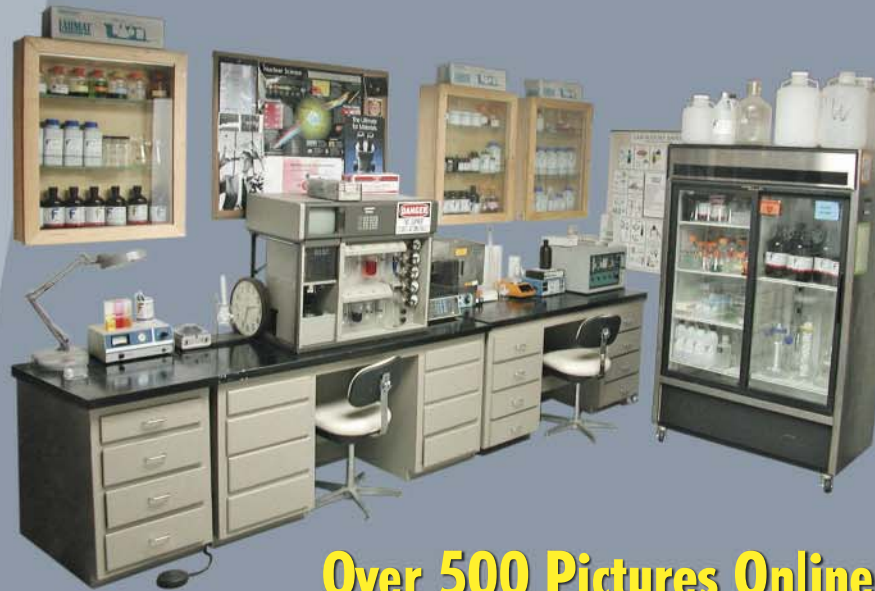
well-braced arch wall and breathlessly banged out her opening line, "My God, I feel like I just climbed Mt. Everest." This in a white-tailored form-fitting suit, trimmed in ermine, with a wide-brimmed hat—to, of course, thunderous applause from the audience. Act II opened with her plunked center stage draping the sofa in a multicolor sequined dress that cast a multitude of sparkling reflections across the back wall of the set. I'm not quite sure, but I believe Act III was a shoulder-less jet-black gown that set off her well-made-up and glowing neck and shoulders. The lighting and her makeup made it work. Thursday afternoon, she came to the theater early and had a television wheeled backstage. She assembled the entire crew to watch a rerun of her 1957 *Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour*, called "The Celebrity Next Door," filmed in Hollywood. It is rumored that she and Lucy butted heads throughout the filming week, but it turned out to be one of the most watched shows of the series, and is now documented on YouTube.

Through the years, I have flashed back to those fun times in summer theater. I'll never forget the final Saturday night of *Glad Tidings*. I was stage left in the lighting alcove planning my plot for next week's show when I received a light tap on the shoulder. Tallulah was personally delivering an autographed photograph to her most important man in the theater. Four years later, Tallulah passed away at the age of sixty-six. **ADG**

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# production design

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## SCREEN CREDIT WAIVERS

*by Laura Kamogawa, Credits Administrator*

The following requests to use the Production Design screen credit have been granted during the months of May and June by the ADG Council upon the recommendation of the Production Design Credit Waiver Committee.

### FILM:

Yuda Acco – THE HOWLING: REBORN –  
Anchor Bay Films  
Charlie Daboub – TOOTH FAIRY 2 –  
20th Century Fox  
David Gropman – LIFE OF PI – 20th Century Fox  
Alec Hammond – MAN ON A LEDGE –  
Summit Entertainment  
Dwight Jackson – THE LAST RIDE –  
20th Century Fox  
Martin Laing – THIS MEANS WAR –  
20th Century Fox  
Dan Leigh – VAMPS – Vamps, LLC  
Kara Lindstrom – EVERYTHING MUST GO –  
Lionsgate  
Stephen Lineweaver – MARDI GRAS – Screen Gems  
Alex McDowell – NOW – New Regency Productions  
Cabot McMullen – RED STATE – Lionsgate  
Philip Messina – MACHINE GUN PREACHER –  
Lionsgate  
Joseph Nemec III – SAFE – Lionsgate  
David Sandefur – FINAL DESTINATION 5 –  
Warner Bros.  
Richard Sherman – THE TWILIGHT SAGA:  
BREAKING DAWN Parts 1 and 2 –  
Summit Entertainment  
Rusty Smith – A VERY HAROLD & KUMAR  
CHRISTMAS – Warner Bros.  
John Willett – THE GREY – The Grey Film Holdings

### TELEVISION:

Maria Caso – HALLELUJAH – ABC Studios  
Mark Garner – BAD MOM – ABC Studios  
Greg Grande – THE NINE LIVES OF CHLOE KING  
and SWITCHED AT BIRTH – both ABC Family  
Devorah Herbert – REVENGE – ABC Studios  
Bruce Hill – THE PROTECTOR – ABC Studios  
Billy Jett – ALIEN TORNADO – Syfy Channel  
Rachel Kamerman – PRETTY LITTLE LIARS –  
ABC Family  
Anthony Medina – SONS OF ANARCHY –  
20th Century Fox  
Edward Pisoni – DAMAGES –  
Sony Pictures Television  
Patti Podesta – HOMELAND – Showtime  
Deborah Raymond – THE FRESH BEAT BAND –  
Nickelodeon  
Stephen P. Storer – THE RIVER – ABC Studios  
Steven Wolff – GOOD CHRISTIAN BELLES –  
ABC Studios  
John Zachary – OTHER PEOPLE'S KIDS –  
ABC Studios

### DUAL CREDIT REQUESTS:

The Art Directors Guild Council voted to grant dual Production Design credit to Steve Joyner and Caylah Eddleblute for the feature SPY KIDS 4: ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD – The Weinstein Company.

# calendar

## GUILD ACTIVITIES

August 15 @ 7 PM  
IMA Council Meeting

August 21 @ 5:30 PM  
DAS BOOT (1981)  
Film Society Screening  
at the Egyptian Theatre

September 5  
Labor Day  
Guild Offices Closed

September 7 @ 6:30 PM  
New Member Orientation  
Town Hall Meeting

September 19 @ 7 PM  
IMA Council Meeting

September 20 @ 7 PM  
ADG Council Meeting

September 21 @ 5:30 PM  
STG Council Meeting

September 22 @ 7 PM  
SDM Craft Membership Meeting

September 25 @ 5:30 PM  
FRIDA (2002)  
Film Society Screening  
at the Aero Theatre

September 27 @ 6:30 PM  
Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesdays @ 7 PM  
Figure Drawing Workshop  
Studio 800 at the ADG

## VISIT THE GUILD'S FINE ARTS GALLERY



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# membership



## WELCOME TO THE GUILD

by Alex Schaaf, Manager,  
Membership Department

During the months of May and June, the following 25 new members were approved by the Councils for membership in the Guild:

### Art Directors:

Eric A. Berg – CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL –  
Warner Bros. Entertainment  
Jason Bistarkey – WCG ULTIMATE GAMER –  
Syfy Channel  
Tudor Boloni – SLUMBER PARTY SLAUGHTER –  
Seraphim Films, Inc.  
Doug Fick – THE COLLECTION – Odd Box 2, LLC  
Jeffrey Pratt Gordon – SINGLE LADIES –  
VH1 Television  
E. Carl Hoagland IV – BAD ASS –  
Amber Lamps, LLC  
Nate Jones – 51 – After Dark Films/Syfy  
Michael Leonard – FAMILY BRAINSURGE –  
Nickelodeon  
David Stone – NINTENDO 3DS –  
Anonymous Content

### Commercial Art Directors:

Loren Basulto – Various signatory commercials  
Quito Cooksey – Various signatory commercials  
David King – Various signatory commercials  
Eric Troop – Various signatory commercials

CONTAGION was filmed on locations around the world, including Hong Kong, Macao, Chicago, Atlanta, San Francisco, Abu Dhabi, London, Geneva and Los Angeles.



### Assistant Art Directors:

Samantha Avila – GAME CHANGE – HBO  
Jonathan Carlos – MY MOTHER'S CURSE –  
Paramount Pictures  
Bret Tanzer – THE BOSS – Lionsgate

### Commercial Assistant Art Directors:

Justin Trask – Various signatory commercials  
Colby Woodland – Various signatory commercials

### Graphic Designer:

Kacey Koeberer – LUCK – HBO

### Graphic Artist:

Ryan Zunkley – Fox Television Stations

### Scenic Artist:

Jack Rogers – CONTAGION – Warner Bros.

### Electronic Graphics Operator:

Diane Randolph – Fox Television Stations

### Illustrators:

Matthias Beegur – Various signatory commercials  
Kory Victor – Various signatory commercials

### Storyboard Artist:

Jane Wu – THE AVENGERS – Walt Disney Studios

## TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

At the end of June, the Guild had 1923 members.

## AVAILABLE LIST

At the end of June, the available lists included:

- 173 Art Directors
- 51 Assistant Art Directors
- 9 Scenic Artists
- 1 Assistant Scenic Artist
- 3 Student Scenic Artists
- 5 Graphic Artists
- 11 Graphic Designers
- 70 Senior Illustrators
- 2 Matte Artists
- 67 Senior Set Designers
- 5 Junior Set Designers
- 6 Senior Model Makers

## CONTAGION

**Howard Cummings,**  
Production Designer  
Abdellah Baadil, Simon  
Dobbin, David Lazan,  
Art Directors  
Kelly A. Hogan,  
Assistant Art Director  
Karen TenEyck,  
Graphic Designer  
Bret August Tanzer,  
Graphic Artist  
Tani Kunitake,  
Illustrator  
Jeff Ozimek,  
Lead Set Designer  
David W. Krummel,  
Chad Owens, Jami  
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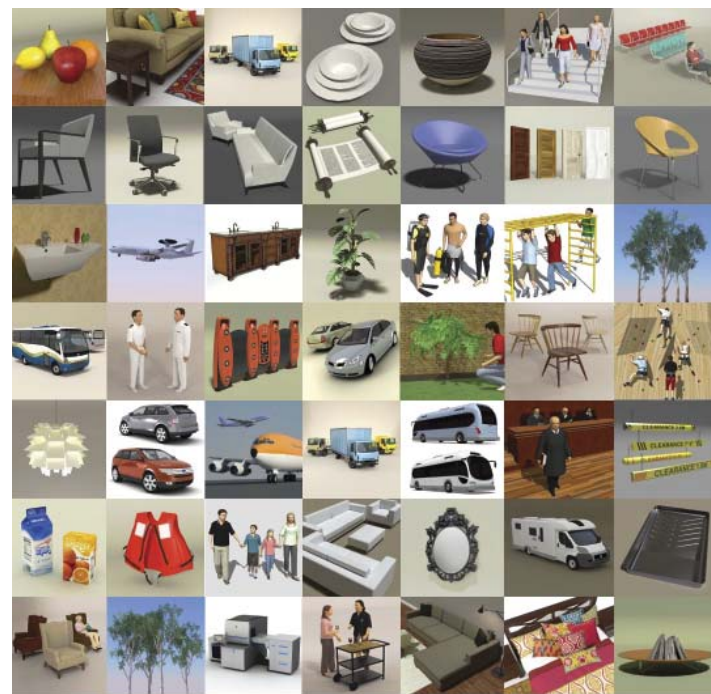
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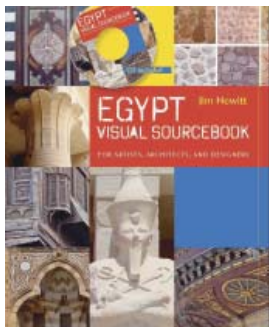
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# in print

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Review by Michael Baugh

Set Designer Jim Hewitt has created a rich visual resource that is exactly the kind of research that professional film, television, and theatrical designers need. The topic is Egypt and the book

## **EGYPT Visual Sourcebook by Jim Hewitt The American University in Cairo Press, 2011. \$59.50 hb**

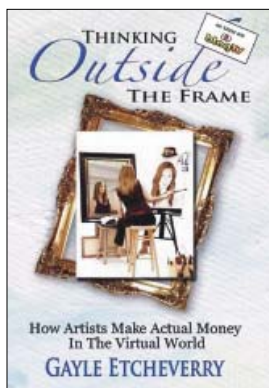
is, at its heart, a photograph album of a research scouting trip to the Nile valley and the Sinai peninsula. The book features 350+ color pages, more than 1000 photographs, of street scenes and architecture. There is no pesky text, other than captions for the pristine photographs of monuments, buildings and architectural details such as windows, doors, railings, columns, corbels, carved stonework, signage, surface textures, and the like. Sections cover the traditional historical landmarks: pyramids, temples, mosques and monasteries. The photography is clear, and the

choice of details could only be made by someone who understands our work. The focus is strongly on traditional Egyptian and Arabic design. The photographs of modern street scenes are limited to the older sections of Cairo.

The greatest strength of Hewitt's work is its organization. The early sections serve as establishing shots for the various landmarks and buildings. Later sections feature cropped images of these wider views grouped by typology, such as arches, doors and columns. The final sections feature even tighter cropping of the primary images, this time featuring details such as stone and brick patterns and signage.

The book comes packaged with a CD containing all of the individual images, wide shots and details as well, ready to be pasted into Photoshop® sketches or texture-mapped onto 3D models.

Available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or Hennessey+Ingalls in Santa Monica.



by GlobalEdAdvance Press

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## **THINKING OUTSIDE THE FRAME: How Artists Make Actual Money in the Virtual World by Gayle Etcheverry GlobalEdAdvance Press, 2011. \$24.95 pb**

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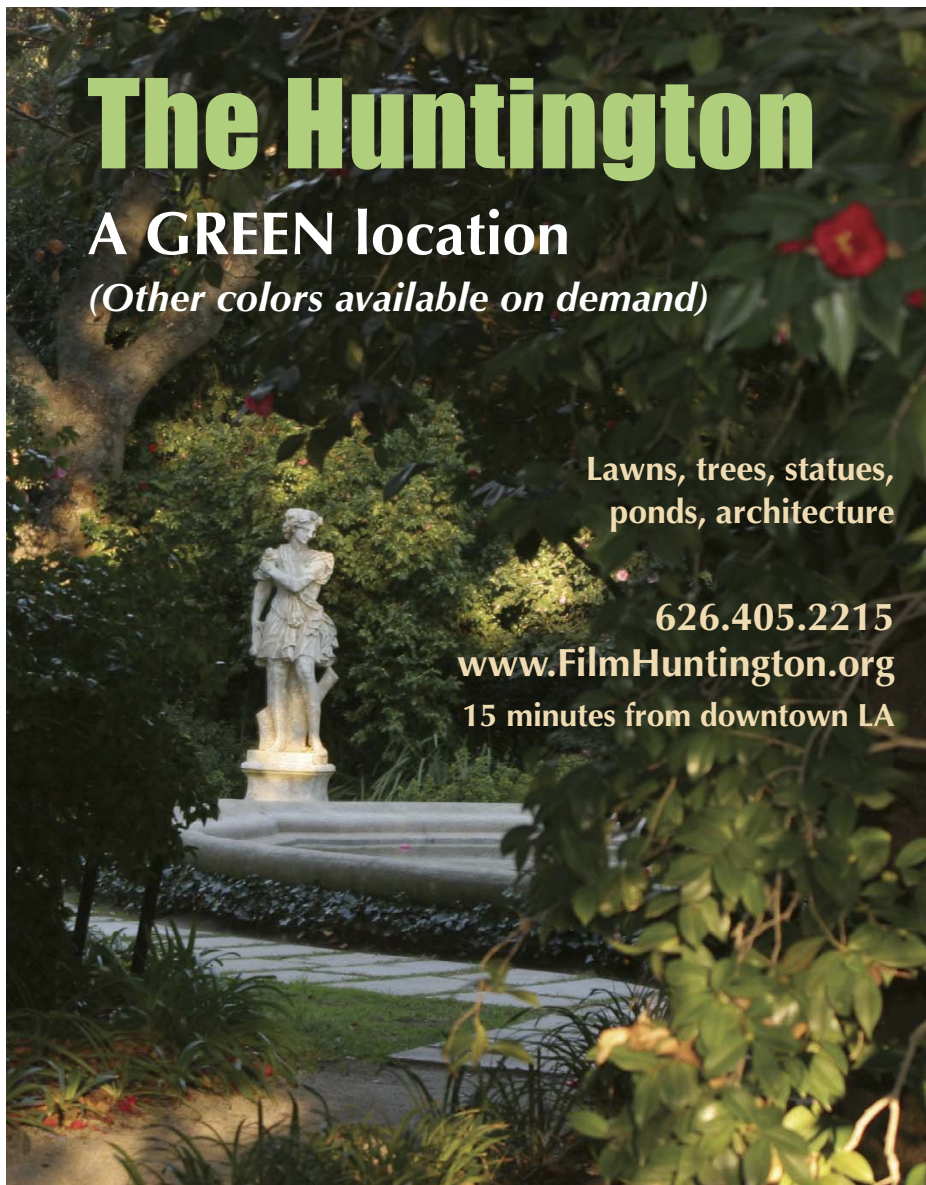
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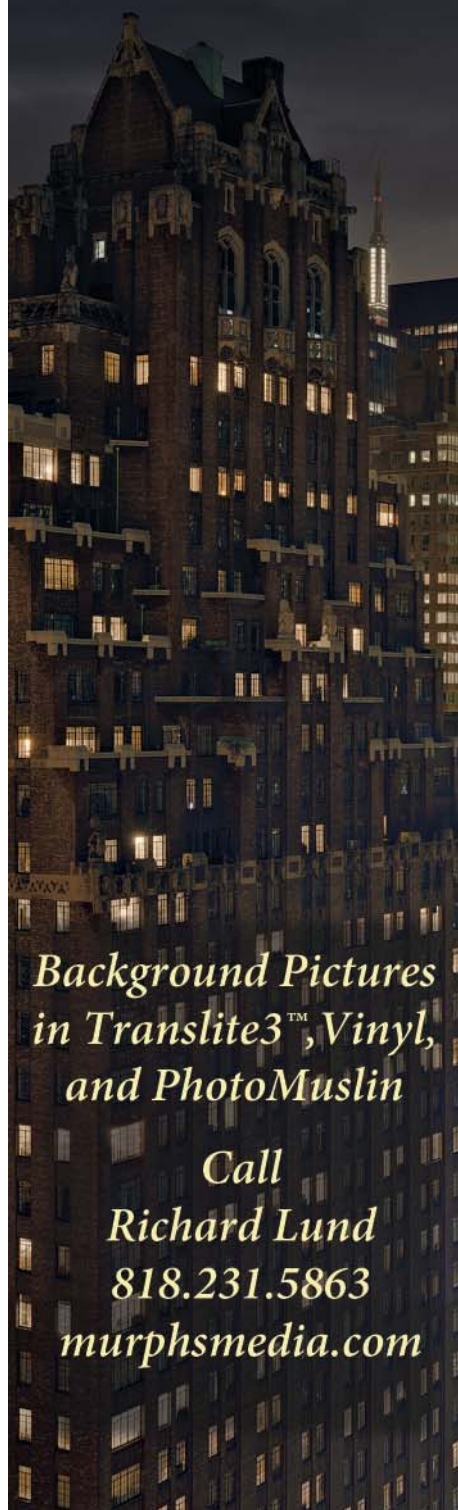
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# milestones

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**ED FLESH**  
**1931–2011**



Edwin Albert Flesh Jr., one of the industry's leading game-show designers, died in Mission Hills, CA, at the age of 79 of congestive heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Flesh, born and raised in Philadelphia, completed his undergraduate work at Franklin and Marshall College, and then spent three years pursuing a master's degree in scenic design at the Yale School of Drama. After Yale, he moved to New York City where he designed off-Broadway projects and landed at NBC as Supervisor of Scenic Design on various soap operas, talk and game shows. Moving from east to west, Flesh relocated to NBC in Burbank as the senior Art Director on the soap opera, *Days of Our Lives*, as well as several successful game shows. One of Ed's most famous designs was that for NBC's *Wheel of Fortune*. He was the one who conceived of the wheel that spins horizontally—it was originally intended to be a vertical wheel. His NBC game-show designs were truly groundbreaking and every major production company wanted his Midas touch. His large, bright sets lent shows a sense of luxury that the utilitarian designs of the 1950s and early 1960s lacked.

Game-show icon Bob Eubanks stated, "Ed was a classy man with a great deal of creativity. He designed five shows I was involved with *All-Star Secrets*, *The Toni Tennille Show*, *You Bet Your Life*, *Infatuation* and *The New Newlywed Game*. He truly was a master of his craft."

**Top right: WHEEL OF FORTUNE, with Ed Flesh's horizontal wheel, first aired on CBS as a daytime series in 1975. Host Pat Sajak replaced Chuck Woolery in 1981 and the syndicated version debuted in 1983.**

After leaving NBC to form his own company, Flesh designed game shows for all three networks and syndication such as *Second Chance*, *Press Your Luck*, *The New \$25,000 Pyramid*, *Celebrity Sweepstakes*, *Name That Tune*, *To Say the Least*, *Jeopardy!* and more than twenty others. In addition to game shows, Flesh designed the set for David Letterman's first talk show on NBC, as well as *The Montel Williams Show* and three special Oprah's, the Streisand, Madonna and Travolta shows.

Flesh is survived by David Powers, his partner of more than forty years.

## POLLY PLATT 1939–2011

by Antonia and Sashy Bogdanovich, her daughters

Polly Platt, the Oscar®-nominated Production Designer of such films as *The Last Picture Show* and *Terms of Endearment* and producer of *Broadcast News* and *Say Anything*, died of Lou Gehrig's disease at her home in Brooklyn, NY. She was 72.

Platt was best known for creating the distinctive period sets on films directed by her former husband Peter Bogdanovich, including *The Last Picture Show* and *Paper Moon*. Platt was one of the first female Art Directors in the Guild, and, in the early years of independent film in the 1970s, the rare woman who worked behind the camera.

She was born in Fort Sheridan, IL, to John Platt, an Army colonel, and Vivian Marr Platt, one of the first female ad executives at a top agency in New York. The family moved to Germany right after World War II, where her father was a judge at the Dachau trials of Nazi war criminals. Living in Europe as a child influenced Platt's attitude and her aesthetic sensibilities, and it made her tough, what she saw there. Her talent in Production Design came from her absolutely exquisite taste, and she developed a lot of that taste living in Europe.

Platt studied art at Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie-Mellon University) in Pittsburgh and then moved to New York, where she worked in summer stock theater and met Peter Bogdanovich, whom she would later marry. She started in the movies as a costume designer and stunt double for Nancy Sinatra on Roger Corman's *The Wild Angels* (1966). In 1968, she helped Bogdanovich write his first movie, *Targets*, and was the Production Designer on that film and his next, *The Last Picture Show* (1971). Their marriage fell apart very publically on that film when Bogdanovich left her for the movie's star, Cybill Shepherd, but the two continued to work together on *Paper Moon* and *What's Up Doc?* Platt later married prop master Tony Wade.

"She worked on important pictures and made major contributions," Bogdanovich told the *Los*



Photograph by Sashy Bogdanovich

*Angeles Times*. "She was unique. There weren't many women doing that kind of work at that time, particularly not one as well versed as she was. She knew all the departments on a workmanlike basis, as opposed to most producers who just know things in theory."

*Los Angeles Times* film critic Patrick Goldstein wrote, "Geez, there was never anyone, and I really mean anyone, who was more fun to talk to about movies than Polly Platt. She was the ultimate behind-the-scenes figure in Hollywood, the woman who was something of a svengali, mentor and sounding board for a variety of big-shot directors, from Peter Bogdanovich and Jim Brooks to Cameron Crowe and Wes Anderson.

Producer Stacey Sher (*Erin Brockovich*, *Out of Sight* and the upcoming *Contagion*) told Goldstein, "Polly was my inspiration and the ultimate creative

# milestones

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muse. She was a rock star. She knew how to do everybody's job as well as they did."

Platt had an extended collaboration with writer-director-producer James L. Brooks, serving as executive vice president of his production company, Gracie Films, and producing *Broadcast News*, *Say Anything*, *War of the Roses* and director Wes Anderson's first feature film, *Bottle Rocket*. She was also instrumental in bringing Matt Groening, the creator of *The Simpsons*, to Gracie Films when she saw his comic strip *Life in Hell*.

Anne Thompson describes Platt as a "driving force" on movies. "There is no job description for her considerable creative talents. Part Art Director, part dramaturge, part mentor, she occupied a singular role on many of the most memorable films of the past forty years. She was irreplaceable. She is irreplaceable. She is the Godmother of Hollywood humanism. She was an artist whose art was to make people greater artists."

There was such a thing as the Platt touch: lived-in sets and lived-in characters, emotionally messy and passionate. Her involvement with directors (she worked on the first features of Bogdanovich, Brooks, Crowe and Anderson) had a steroidal impact on their careers.

In 1994, she was awarded the Women in Film Crystal Award. "She couldn't walk into a gas station and get gas without mentoring somebody," Brooks said. "Movies are a team sport, and she made teams function. She would assume a maternal role in terms of really being there. The film was everything, and ego just didn't exist."

The 1984 film *Irreconcilable Differences*, starring Ryan O'Neal, Shelley Long and Drew Barrymore, was reportedly based on her marriage to Bogdanovich and their divorce.

Her final producing credit brought her full circle in Hollywood with a 2011 documentary about low-budget producer/director Roger Corman, *Corman's World: Exploits of a Hollywood Rebel*; and, according to her daughter Antonia, she had just finished writing a memoir.

Platt is survived by her brother Jack Platt and her two daughters, Antonia Bogdanovich and Sashy Bogdanovich, and three grandsons. She also leaves behind two stepchildren, Kelly Wade and John Wade, from her marriage to Tony Wade.

A private memorial will take place in Los Angeles in September. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Women in Film at [www.wif.org](http://www.wif.org) or by calling 323 935 2211.



## **ALAINA LEIGH DUFFY** **July 9, 2011**

ADG Scenic Artist member Nathan Duffy and his wife Kelly had a beautiful 9 lb, 14 oz, 22-inch baby girl, Alaina Leigh Duffy, born July 9. Proud Grandmother Bridget Duffy, is also a Scenic Artist and a member of the Art Directors Guild.

Alaina has two older brothers, Brendon and Matthew.

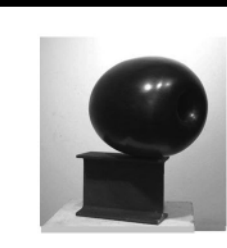
**Right: Scenic Artist Nathan Duffy with his daughter Alaina Leigh Duffy.**

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# reshoots

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This lovely oil-on-paper sketch was created by Production Designer Hein Heckroth for the British production of *THE RED SHOES* (1948), based on an adaptation of Hans Christian Anderson's tragic fairy tale. The story of a young ballet dancer who commits suicide when torn between love and her career, updated to a setting in modern Britain, seems almost trivial when contrasted with the film's extraordinary Production Design, richly colored sets, and glamorous film-studio theatricality, influenced by both Impressionist and Surrealist sensibilities. The hugely successful film won Heckroth an Oscar®, and the film a Best Picture nomination. Born in Holland, Heckroth was a prominent stage designer in Germany before the rise of Hitler, and then in France and Great Britain. He joined with choreographer Kurt Jooss and together they started a revolutionary movement against realism, inspired by designers like Gordon Craig and Adolph Appia. After the war, Heckroth became an assistant to Alfred Junge and worked with the great film designer on a number of projects, including *BLACK NARCISSUS* for which Heckroth designed the costumes. In later years, he designed *TORN CURTAIN* (1966) for Alfred Hitchcock, but *THE RED SHOES* will always remain his masterpiece.

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