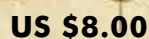


THE JOURNAL OF THE ART DIRECTORS GUILD

**MARCH – APRIL 2015**

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BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN

KEVIN THOMPSON PRODUCTION DESIGNER

GEORGE DETITTA JR., SDSA SET DECORATOR

B I R D M A N

OR

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13 CRITICS' CHOICE

NOMINATIONS INCLUDING

BEST PICTURE

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BEST ACTOR MICHAEL KEATON

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ART DIRECTORS GUILD AWARDS

NOMINEE

CONTEMPORARY FILM
EXCELLENCE IN PRODUCTION DESIGN
FOR A FEATURE FILM

**10 BAFTA AWARD
NOMINATIONS**

INCLUDING

BEST FILM

GOTHAM INDEPENDENT FILM AWARDS

WINNER!

BEST FEATURE
BEST ACTOR MICHAEL KEATON

"THE PRODUCTION DESIGN IN 'BIRDMAN' IS LIKE A LIVING CREATURE.
Most of the action takes place in the complex backstage maze of a Broadway theater,
where hallway passing becomes a feint and turn affair of bodies in tight spaces."

Betsy Sharkey, *Los Angeles Times*

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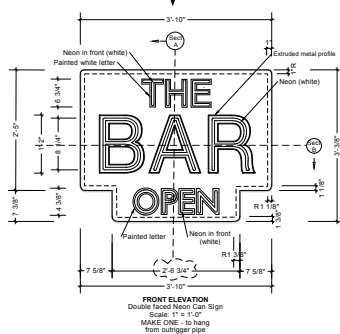
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...and still going strong
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ON THE COVER:

A detail of a hand-drawn elevation, section and plan of the space port cantina at Mos Eisley from the first *Star Wars* (1976 – later called *Episode IV*), built on stage at Elstree Studios outside of London. The pencil drafting was created by Alan Roderick-Jones, credited as the Assistant to Oscar®-winning Production Designer John Barry.

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PERSPECTIVE

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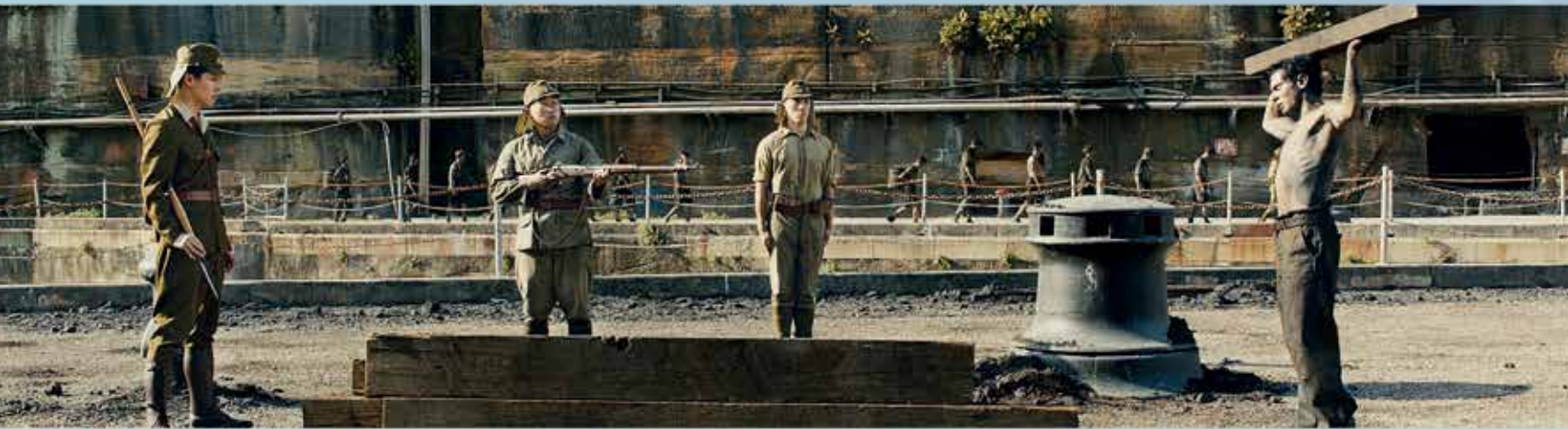
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F O R Y O U R C O N S I D E R A T I O N



JON HUTMAN

EXCELLENCE IN PRODUCTION DESIGN FOR A FEATURE FILM
(*PERIOD FILM*)

UNBROKEN

THE UNBELIEVABLE TRUE STORY





DESIGN IS DESIGN

by Michael Baugh, Editor

It is Awards season and lots of lunch and cocktail conversation revolves around what films have been nominated in which categories, and—more often— which achievements were not nominated, but should have been. Even here on California's Central Coast where I am writing this, I hear these discussions at restaurants and wine tastings and even in my own living room. Everyone seems to have a favorite film that was snubbed. I am no exception.

There are lots of opportunities to reward good feature film design. The Motion Picture Academy nominated five wonderful-looking films. The ADG Awards have three separate categories for motion pictures. Then there are BAFTA Awards, Césars, Genies, Golden Palms, Silver Bears, and hundreds if not thousands of film critics' nominations. Plenty of good Production Design is on display everywhere this month, and I enjoy it all.

But the one film whose whimsical look I absolutely loved was ignored by each and every one of these knowledgeable groups. The reason, I am certain, is because all of the sets were built for actors the size of a Barbie doll. I'm talking, of course, about *The Boxtrolls*, the most ambitious and elaborate stop-motion feature film ever shot.

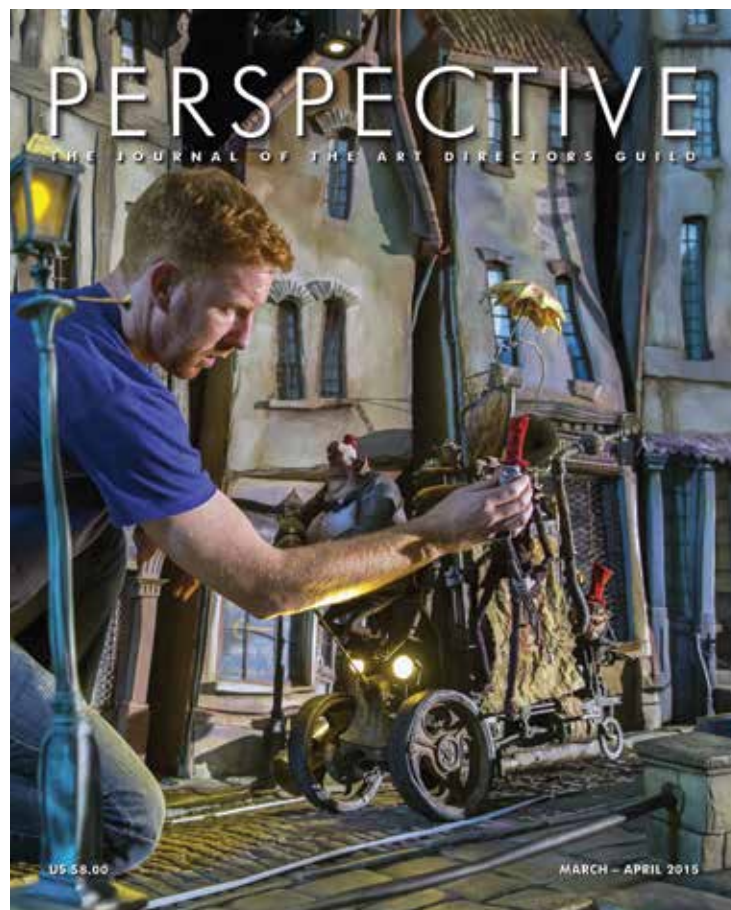
Based on Alan Snow's book *Here Be Monsters!*, *The Boxtrolls* is huge and complicated. It features 79 highly inventive and fanciful sets, 20,000 handmade props and pieces of set dressing, 200 animated puppets (including one that is five-feet tall), a thousand tiny pieces of wardrobe, and many thousands of interchangeable limbs and facial parts. The lead character, Eggs, had more than 15,000 pieces of his face alone—different tops and bottoms, eyebrows and mouths—all created in-house on 3D rapid prototyping printers.

The design process is very similar to live action. Art Director Curt Enderle says, "Set Designers work from 2D illustrations and develop scale and style within VectorWorks® to generate drawings for the construction shops—just like the real world, only smaller." In addition to a full Art Department, the film provided more than a year's work for thirteen model builders, twelve carpenters, nine Scenic Artists, three Graphic Designers, eight set dressers and four greens persons.

The final result is totally immersive entertainment. The medieval town of Cheesebridge, with its twisted cobblestone streets and market squares opulent homes and eerie sewers comes to life.

Good design is good design, no matter how big the sets are.

Below: The cover, if my favorite films were nominated. John Leonhardt positions one of the Red Hats on the diabolical Boxtroll-extermination vehicle.



contributors



SUSAN CHAN was born in New York City and raised in central New Jersey where her parents owned the only Chinese restaurant in town. She graduated from Harvard University with a degree in visual and environmental studies and a minor in East Asian studies. After college, she and her husband moved to San Francisco, where she found work first in architecture, then in theater before entering film. In 1997, the lure of Hollywood and more interesting design challenges led her to Los Angeles. She has worked in short-form and long-form television, commercials and both independent and studio film projects, and is currently the Production Designer on the Fox series *Weird Loners*. "I love what we do in the Art Department," she says. "Every project has its unique set of stories to craft, and the collaboration with the talented men and women who come together to make movies and television shows is endlessly rewarding. I wouldn't trade my job for anything."



KEVIN KAVANAUGH was raised in Southern California and graduated from San Francisco State University. He first became interested in film design while working part time during college at American Zoetrope Studios during the making of *The Godfather: Part III* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. He stayed on as Francis Coppola's assistant for three years in San Francisco before moving back to Southern California. Mr. Kavanaugh made his debut as a Production Designer on Drew Barrymore's directorial debut, *Whip It*. Since then he was the co-designer on Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight Rises* as well as Art Director on several other projects with Mr. Nolan, including *The Dark Knight* and *The Prestige*. His other Production Design credits include *Casa de mi Padre*, *Going the Distance*, and the upcoming *Rings*, and he has worked as an Art Director with designers Tom Sanders, Nathan Crowley, Jeff Mann and Scott Chambliss. He now lives near Pasadena with his wife and two children.



WOLF KROEGER was born in East Germany and moved with his family to Australia shortly after the Second World War. He was educated there and began his career in television, before returning to Germany for two seasons as a set designer with the Bavarian State Opera. In the early 1970s, he designed television and film in Canada, and toward the end of that decade worked regularly on American productions which were often shot in Canada, as well as in Europe, Asia and Africa. He won two Genie Awards for *The Bay Boy* and *Shadow of the Wolf*, and a BAFTA Award nomination for Michael Mann's *The Last of the Mohicans*. Director Robert Altman selected Mr. Kroeger to design the whimsical village of Sweet Haven for the film *Popeye*, a set which still stands as a tourist attraction in Malta. In addition to multiple times with Mr. Altman, Mr. Kroeger has also worked with Brian De Palma, Michael Cimino, Daniel Petrie, Mike Newell, Ted Kotcheff and John McTiernan.



A graduate of London's Chelsea School of Art, **ALAN RODERICK-JONES** has had a prolific career in many areas of entertainment, fine arts and advertising. He has designed over nine hundred commercials for leading worldwide advertising agencies and is the recipient of numerous awards for Production Design, including six CLIO Awards, the Silver Lion at Cannes and the New York Advertising Award for Excellence in Art Direction. He began his career as a draftsman in the Art Departments of the British film industry, and had the rare opportunity to be mentored by some of the industry's finest Production Designers, including John Barry, John Box, Peter Murton, John Bryan and Geoffrey Drake. He continues to work as a fine artist, creating landscape paintings, figurative nudes, sculpture, and silkscreens, which are exhibited in regional galleries across the country. He has also designed a series of interactive games, including *Van Helsing*, *Hulk 2* and *Dirty Harry*. He currently lives in Malibu, California.

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CHRISTOPHER NOLAN

CINEMATIC IMAGERY AWARD RECIPIENT
FOR HIS BREATHTAKING CONTRIBUTION TO THE ART OF FILM

ALONG WITH PRODUCTION DESIGNER
NATHAN CROWLEY
AND THE ENTIRE DESIGN TEAM FOR BRINGING
THE VISION OF 'INTERSTELLAR' TO LIFE.



A FILM BY CHRISTOPHER NOLAN

INTERSTELLAR

PARAMOUNT PICTURES AND WARNER BROS. PICTURES PRESENT
IN ASSOCIATION WITH LEGENDARY PICTURES A SYNCOPY / LYNDA OBST PRODUCTIONS PRODUCTION A FILM BY CHRISTOPHER NOLAN "INTERSTELLAR" MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY ANNE HATHAWAY JESSICA CHASTAIN BILL IRVIN ELLEN BURSTYN AND MICHAEL CAINE COSTUME DESIGNER MARY ZOPHRES
MUSIC BY HANS ZIMMER EDITOR LEE SMITH A.C.E. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS NATHAN CROWLEY PRODUCED BY HOYTE VAN HOYTEMA F.S.F. N.S.C. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JORDAN GOLDBERG JAKE MYERS KIP THORNE THOMAS TULL WRITTEN BY JONATHAN NOLAN AND CHRISTOPHER NOLAN PRODUCED BY EMMA THOMAS CHRISTOPHER NOLAN LYNDA OBST
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FOOTNOTES: INTERSTELLAR: A FILM BY CHRISTOPHER NOLAN



CHRISTOPHER NOLAN – 2015 CINEMATIC IMAGERY AWARD

by Dave Blass and James Pearse Connelly, ADG Awards Producers

On January 31, 2015, at the Art Directors Guild's Annual Awards Banquet at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, director Christopher Nolan, one of the most successful and creative directors working today, will be presented with the ADG's Outstanding Contribution to Cinematic Imagery Award. Over the course of fifteen years of filmmaking, Nolan has gone from low-budget independent films to directing some of the biggest blockbusters ever made. His most current project, *Interstellar*, has been nominated for an ADG Award for Fantasy Feature Film.

Born in London in 1970, Mr. Nolan began making films at the age of seven using his father's Super 8 camera and an assortment of male action figures. He graduated to making films involving real people, and his Super 8 surrealistic short *Tarantella* was shown on the PBS series *Image Union* in 1989. Chris studied English literature at University College London while starting to make sixteen-millimeter films at the college film society. His short film *Larceny* was shown at the Cambridge Film Festival in 1996, and his other sixteen-millimeter shorts include a three-minute surrealistic film called *Doodlebug*.

Mr. Nolan's first feature, the noir thriller *Following* (1998), shot on a budget of around \$6,000, was recognized at a number of international film festivals prior to its theatrical release, and gained him enough credibility that he was able to gather financing for his next film *Memento* (2000). Starring Guy Pearce, the film based on a short

Above: Christopher Nolan with INTERSTELLAR leading actor Matthew McConaughey inside a hypersleep pod unit, built on location at a cold storage unit in Los Angeles.



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INCLUDING BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN

Production Designer
JAMES CHINLUND

Set Decorator
AMANDA SERINO

ART DIRECTORS GUILD AWARDS
NOMINEE
EXCELLENCE IN PRODUCTION DESIGN
FOR A FEATURE FILM - FANTASY
JAMES CHINLUND - PRODUCTION DESIGNER

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AND VISUALLY BRILLIANT...”**

- MARK HUGHES, **Forbes**

DAWN OF THE **PLANET** OF THE **APES**

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story by Mr. Nolan's brother Jonathan and directed from his own script, brought Mr. Nolan Academy Award® and Golden Globe nominations for Best Original Screenplay, and allowed him to then direct the psychological thriller *Insomnia* (2002), starring Al Pacino, Robin Williams and Hilary Swank.

The turning point in Mr. Nolan's career occurred when he was given the chance to revive the *Batman* franchise. In *Batman Begins* (2005), he brought a level of gravitas and a gritty, modern interpretation to the familiar hero. Production Designer Nathan Crowley received both BAFTA and ADG nominations for the film. Before moving on to a *Batman* sequel, Nolan directed, cowrote and produced the mystery thriller *The Prestige* (2006), starring Christian Bale and Hugh Jackman as magicians whose obsessive rivalry leads to tragedy and murder. Mr. Crowley received an ADG nomination for that film as well.

The Dark Knight (2008), directed, cowritten and produced by Mr. Nolan, went on to gross more than a billion dollars at the worldwide box office. He was nominated for a Directors Guild of America Award, Writers Guild of America Award and Producers Guild of America Award, and the film also received eight Academy Award nominations, including one for Mr. Crowley, who also won the ADG Award for Excellence in Design for a Fantasy Film.

In 2010, Mr. Nolan captivated audiences with the science fiction thriller *Inception*, which he directed and produced from his own original screenplay. The thought-provoking drama was a worldwide blockbuster, earning more than \$800 million. Among its many other honors, *Inception* received four Academy Awards out of its eight nominations, including Mr. Nolan for Best Picture and Best Screenplay. Guy Hendrix Dyas was nominated for Best Art Direction, and he won the ADG Award for Excellence in Design for a Fantasy Film. Mr. Nolan was recognized by his peers again with DGA and PGA Award nominations, as well as a WGA Award win for his work on the film.

The Dark Knight Rises (2012) concluded Nolan's *Batman* trilogy. Due to his success rebooting the *Batman* character, Warner Bros. enlisted Nolan to produce their revamped

Right, top to bottom: INTERSTELLAR: The Ranger, a single-stage-to-orbit (SSTO) spacecraft used by NASA, on a gimbal on Stage 27 at Sony Pictures Studios. The interior of a black hole, also built on Stage 27. INCEPTION: The rotating corridor set was built in Shed 2 at Cardington Stages, a former airship hangar in Bedfordshire, about an hour outside of London.





Superman movie *Man of Steel*, which opened in the summer of 2013.

Mr. Nolan's current film, *Interstellar*, received five Academy Award nominations, including one for Mr. Crowley for Best Production Design. In addition to ADG and Oscar® nominations, Mr. Crowley was also nominated for a BAFTA Award, a Broadcast Film Critics Award, and awards from film critics' associations in Chicago, Florida, Georgia, Phoenix, San Diego and Washington, DC.

Mr. Nolan currently resides in Los Angeles with his wife, producer Emma Thomas, and their children. Nolan and Thomas have their own production company, Syncopy.



Left, top to bottom: The Batcave on Stage 30 at Sony. Two views of the the Batbunker in the Cardington hangar. Above: THE DARK KNIGHT rises on the huge stage at Cardington.



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BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN **John Paul Kelly** **Claire Richards**

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD
AWARD NOMINEE



BEST ENSEMBLE

BEST ACTOR **EDDIE REDMAYNE**
BEST ACTRESS **FELICITY JONES**

5 CRITICS' CHOICE MOVIE
AWARD NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING



BEST PICTURE

BEST ACTOR **EDDIE REDMAYNE**
BEST ACTRESS **FELICITY JONES**

PRODUCERS GUILD OF
AMERICA NOMINEE



BEST PICTURE

ART DIRECTORS
GUILD NOMINEE

EXCELLENCE IN
PRODUCTION DESIGN
FOR A FEATURE FILM
(PERIOD FILM)



10 BAFTA AWARD
NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING



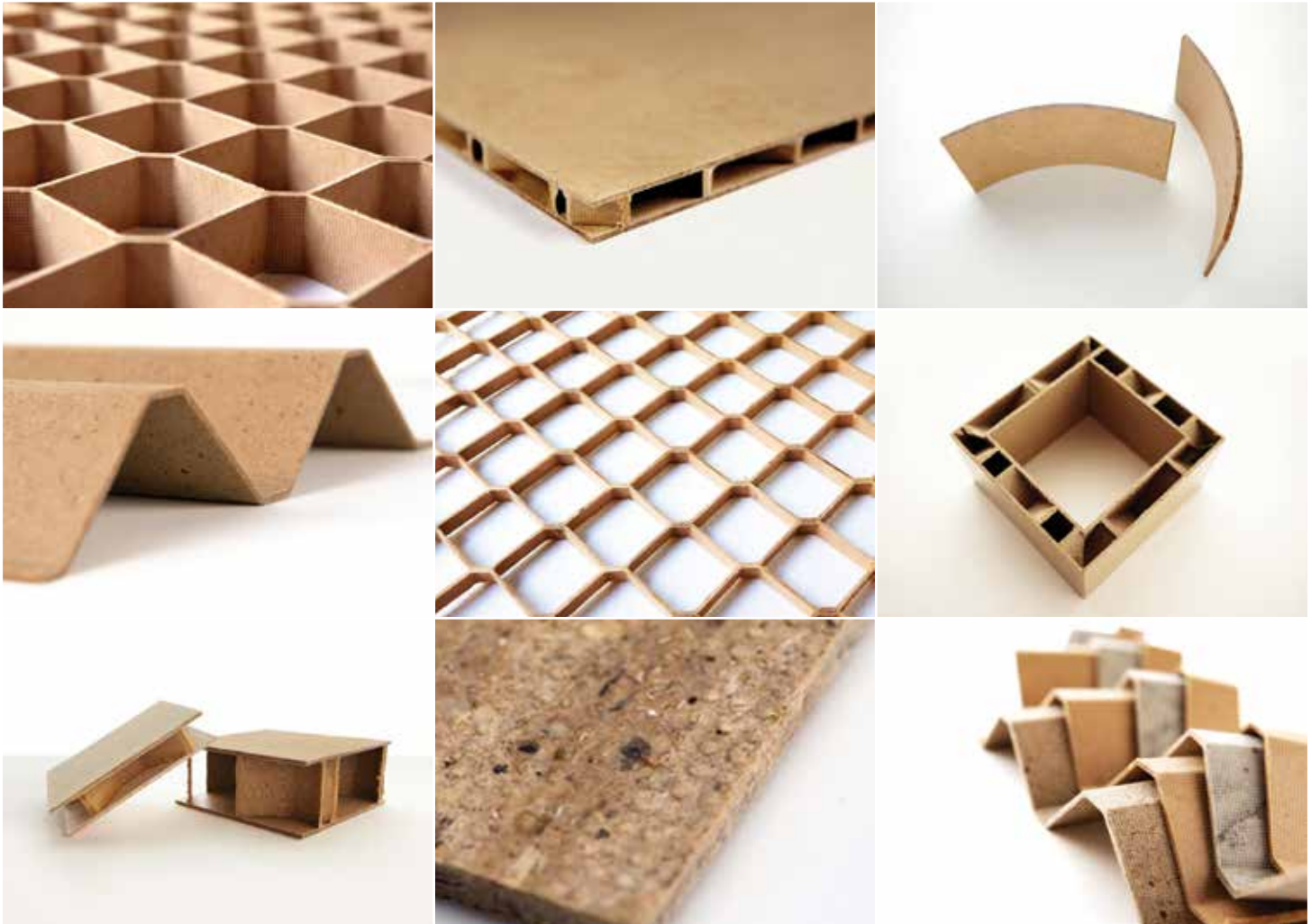
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Environmental Leader, the daily trade publication about energy, environmental and sustainability news, recently reported that Whole Foods and Google are now using a building material called Ecor in their business locations. A few Art Departments have designed film sets with it as well, beating those giant companies to the punch. ECOR®, developed by Noble Environmental Technologies in Serbia, is made from 100% recycled material. It is a sustainable alternative to traditional wood, particleboard, fiberboard, aluminum, plastic and composites. ECOR Advanced Environmental Composites presents a family of natural building materials that are strong, lightweight, flexible, and environmentally-friendly.

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ART DIRECTORS GUILD NOMINEE
EXCELLENCE IN PRODUCTION DESIGN
THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL
Production Designer Adam Stockhausen ~ Set Decorator Anna Pinnock

11 CRITICS' CHOICE
NOMINATIONS INCLUDING
BEST PICTURE
BEST ART DIRECTION

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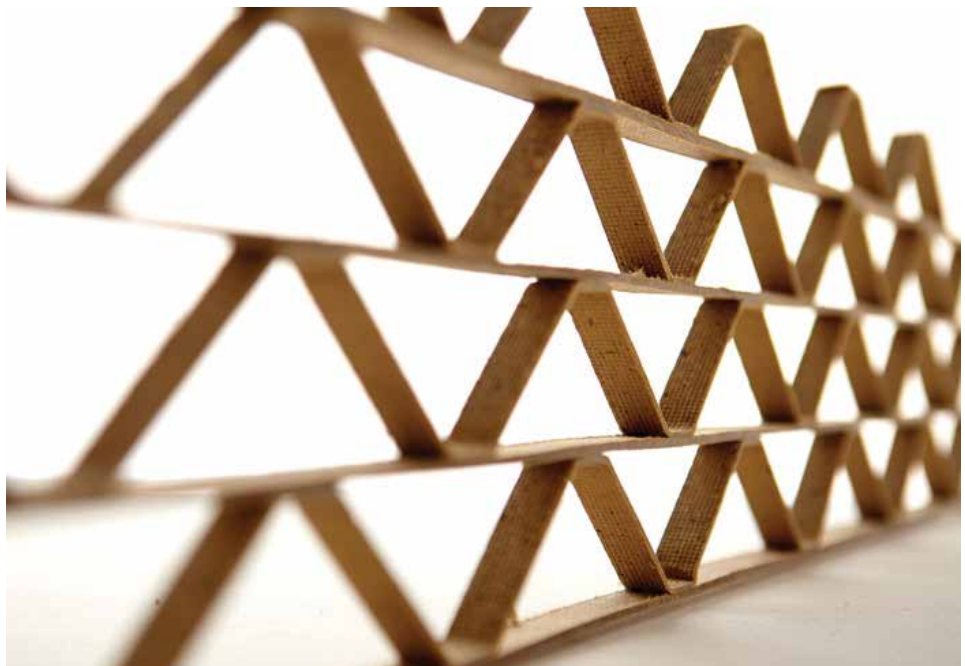
HoneyCOR™ is a honeycomb core made from WavCOR panels that are cut and glued together. HoneyCOR can be used to create various configurations and shapes. HoneyCOR is currently available in 1/2" to 2" thicknesses, and all dimensions.

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FOR A FEATURE FILM IN 2014





3D PRINTING: THE 21st CENTURY TOOL

from Brian McLean, Director of Rapid Prototyping, Laika Studios

Stop-motion animation has been used since the earliest days of filmmaking. The first example of the frame-by-frame animation process is probably 1898's *The Humpty Dumpty Circus*, a short film starring toy circus animals and acrobats. Pioneer animator Willis O'Brien brought *King Kong* to life in 1933 using methods that are still used today.

In recent years, stop-motion animation looked like it might be doomed by CGI. The computer made two-dimensional animation faster, less expensive and more robust. Then a company called Laika came along. The Portland, Oregon, studio combined handmade artistry with the new technology of 3D printing, and their films *Coraline* and *ParaNorman* revitalised the 100-year-old genre.

At the SIGGRAPH Conference in the Vancouver Convention Center this past August, Brian McLean, the studio's Director of Rapid Prototyping, described how Laika pushed the boundaries further with their latest film *Boxtrolls*.

Its Dickensian world of snobby cheese-loving humans and charming but disdained sewer-dwelling, box-clad trolls is the biggest stop-motion production ever mounted, and it would have been impossible a few years ago. The film's creators took the 120-year-old technique and introduced a modern tool: the small, affordable 3D printer. The result is magical.

Each of the film's 185 puppets was handmade, using silicone sculpted over a posable stainless steel armature. The faces are built with interchangeable segments, which can be changed out completely between frames to create different facial expressions. The technique is called "replacement animation," in which parts of a puppet—usually faces or limbs—are replaced with similar (but ever-so-slightly different) parts to achieve the illusion of movement. McLean described the process for creating the replacement faces used during production: "On *Coraline*, we produced upward of 20,000 faces, *ParaNorman* was around 33,000, and with *Boxtrolls* we're upward of 52,000."

Each 1:5 scale puppet (slightly larger than a Barbie doll) is scanned in 3D and its expression tweaked with digital software—Maya® mostly, and ZBrush® sometimes. This modeling process is especially important because 3D printers tend to soften edges and details. The digital models have to be purposefully exaggerated to retain their sculptural origins and compensate for the printing output. Mr. McLean's rapid-prototyping department produced up to 150 faces per day during filming, as well as thousands of pieces for props and set dressing—anything that required multiples, or multiple variations, was a candidate for the printers.

The faces are broken up into facial kits—eyebrows, mouths, mustaches, eyes, etc. The kits are grouped into expressions like "up surprised eyebrows" and "frown mouths." The more replacement parts, the broader the performance possibilities for the puppet. Eggs, the leading character, is capable of around 1.4 million expressions.



FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

ART DIRECTORS GUILD AWARDS
NOMINEE
PRODUCTION DESIGN
IN A PERIOD FILM
MARIA DJURKOVIC

examiner

"METICULOUS PRODUCTION DESIGN.
THERE IS VERY SPECIFIC ATTENTION TO THE ELECTRICAL
DETAIL AND INTRICACIES OF THE SCHEMATICS, AND THE
VERY CLOAK AND DAGGER NATURE OF THE VERY BUILDINGS
IN WHICH THE CODEBREAKERS WORKED, ALL OF WHICH
ELEVATED THE STORY TO AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE."

DEBBIE ELIAS

USA TODAY
"EVOCATIVE PRODUCTION DESIGN."
CLAUDIA PUIG

Los Angeles Times
**"A MARVELOUS-LOOKING
COMPUTING MACHINE**
GRADUALLY GETS BUILT BY MARIA DJURKOVIC,
THE PRODUCTION DESIGNER."
KENNETH TURAN



VARIETY

"TOP-FLIGHT CRAFT CONTRIBUTIONS

ADD TO THE OVERALL CLASSY FEEL, PARTICULARLY THE CLUTTERED DESKS AND
PRIMITIVE COMPUTING MACHINES OF PRODUCTION DESIGNER MARIA DJURKOVIC."

SCOTT FOUNDAS

THE IMITATION GAME



3
BLACK BEAR
PICTURES

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news

After modeling, the process becomes much like traditional CG workflow: rigging, texture painting and animating. But instead of rendering the final images as frames, they are sent to one of Laika's nine printers, manufactured by 3D Systems in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Fifty people work in McLean's department. Half of them create the CG assets, and the other half are responsible for processing the parts as they come off the printers. "Everyone assumes," says McLean, "that the elements are perfect when they come out of the printer, but they're not. They oftentimes are a mess." The post-processing system sometimes includes sanding down edges, smoothing out inconsistencies and applying pastels directly to the piece by hand. "We are [using] a technology that was never designed for replacement animation, never designed for mass production at this level of scrutiny and this level of precision between parts.

"3D printing is really in its infancy. I want to be able to talk to you three years from now and not have there be any limitation between the subtlety that we can put into a face and our ability to get the most out of a character."



Above: Laika has licensed its characters for consumer download to be printed as collectable figurines at home on personal 3D printers.

CONGRATULATIONS

Art Directors Guild Awards Nominee

DAN BISHOP *PRODUCTION
DESIGNER*

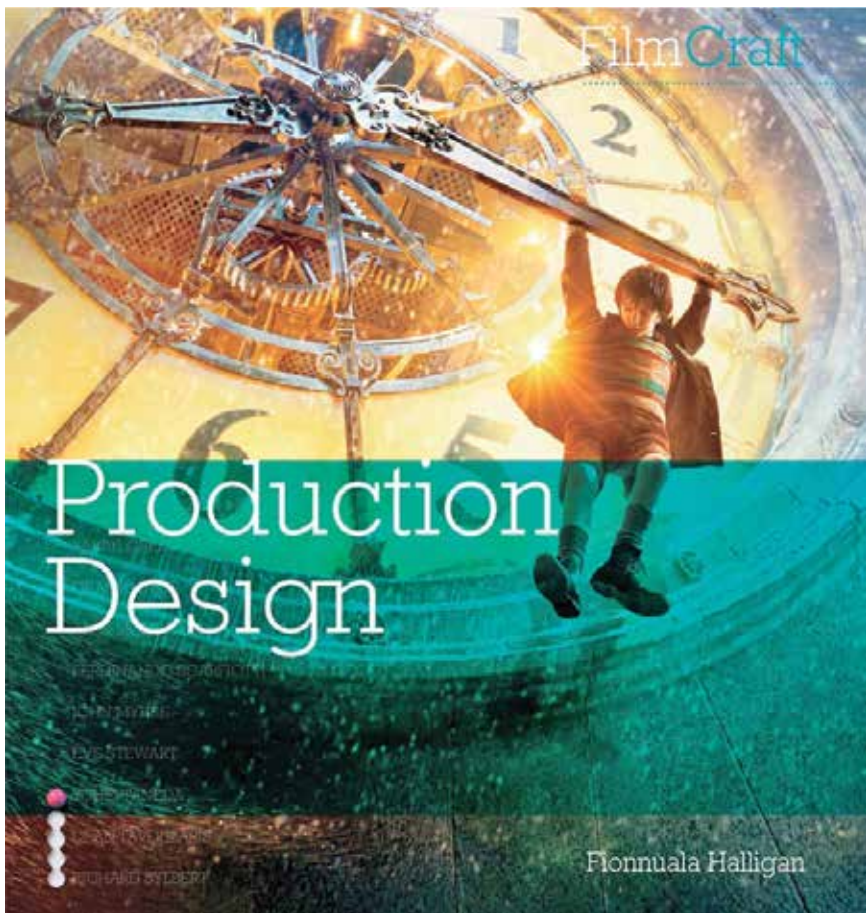


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In *Production Design*, Fionnuala Halligan questions sixteen Production Designers who share their insights, anecdotes and technical achievements, through a series of exclusive interviews. Fascinating for both film fans and practicing entertainment artists, this book is the perfect companion for anyone who wants to learn about the craft from some of the greatest film artists of our time.

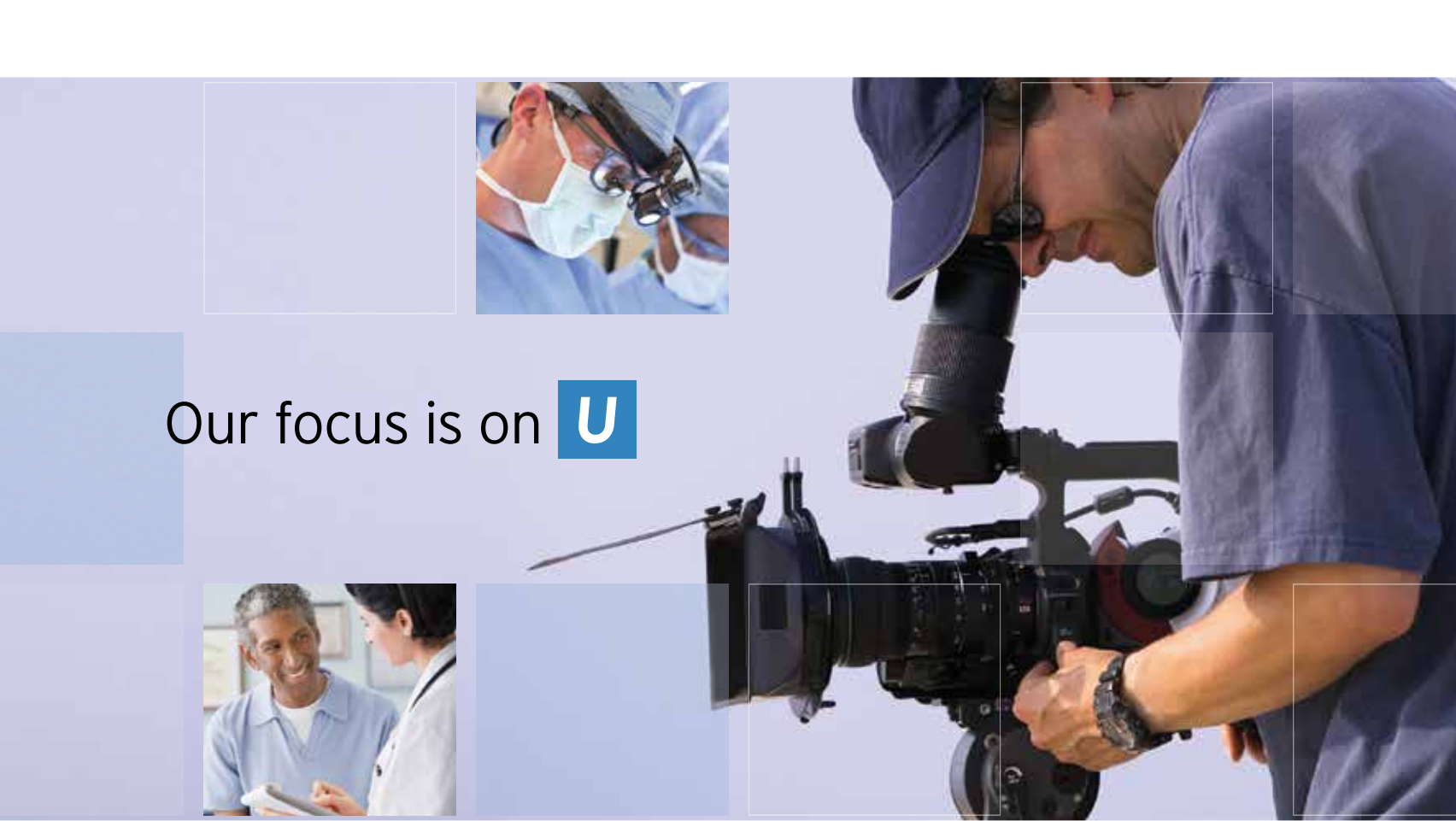
**FilmCraft:
Production Design
by Fionnuala Halligan
ILEX Press, 2012. \$33.95pb**

It includes brand-new interviews with Sir Ken Adam, Dean Tavoularis, Stuart Craig, Dante Ferretti, Jim Bissell, Sarah Greenwood, Eve Stewart, Antxón Gómez, Grant Major, Nathan Crowley, Rick Carter, Alex McDowell, John Myhre and Jack Fisk, among others.

Above: Paperback cover. Right: Rick Carter discusses AVATAR.

Fionnuala Halligan is a London-based film writer, critic and consultant. A regular contributor to SCREEN INTERNATIONAL for two decades, she has also worked extensively in Asia. She attends all the major film festivals as a critic, has served on several juries and selection committees, and has also worked on staff at THE SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST, VARIETY, and THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER.





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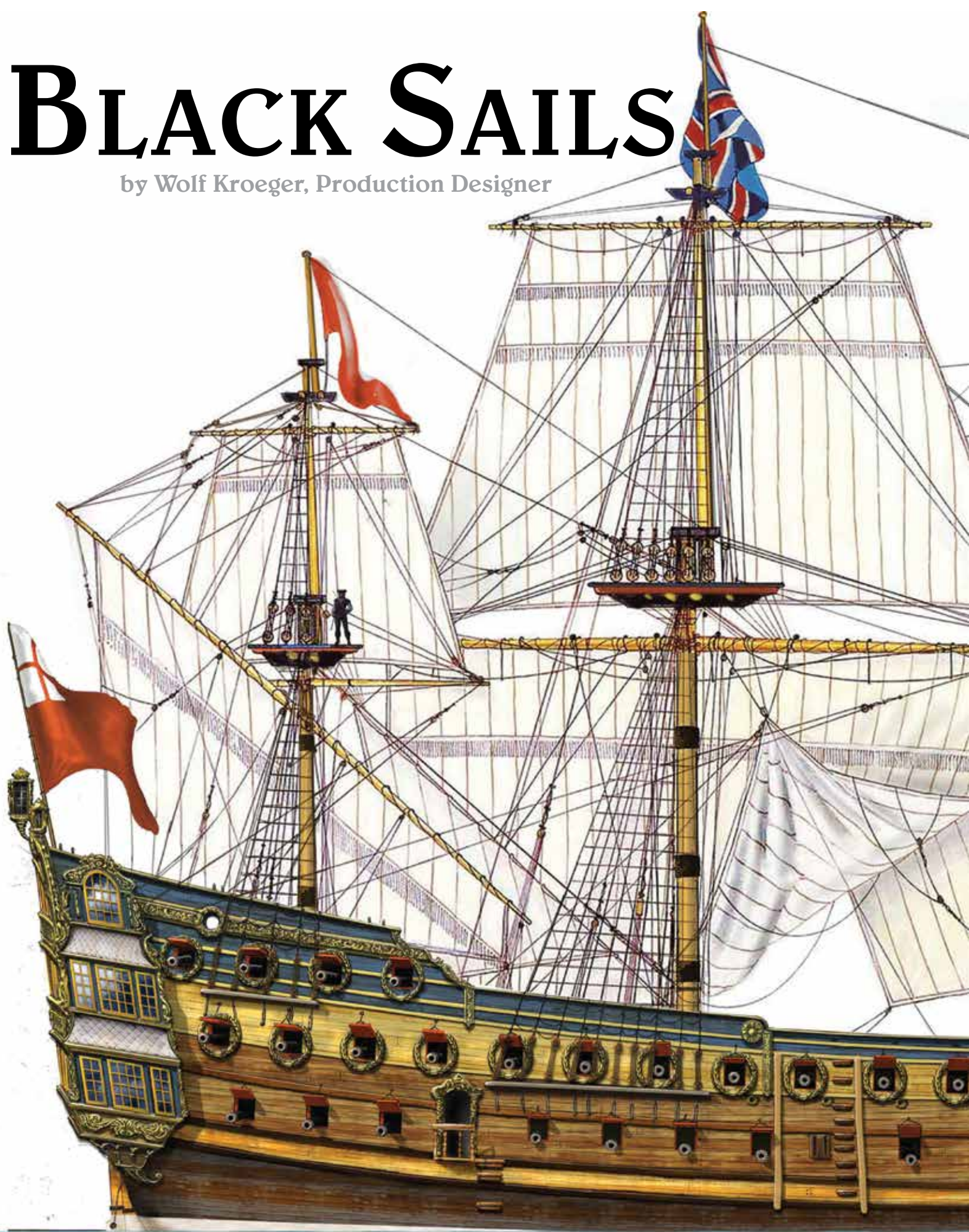
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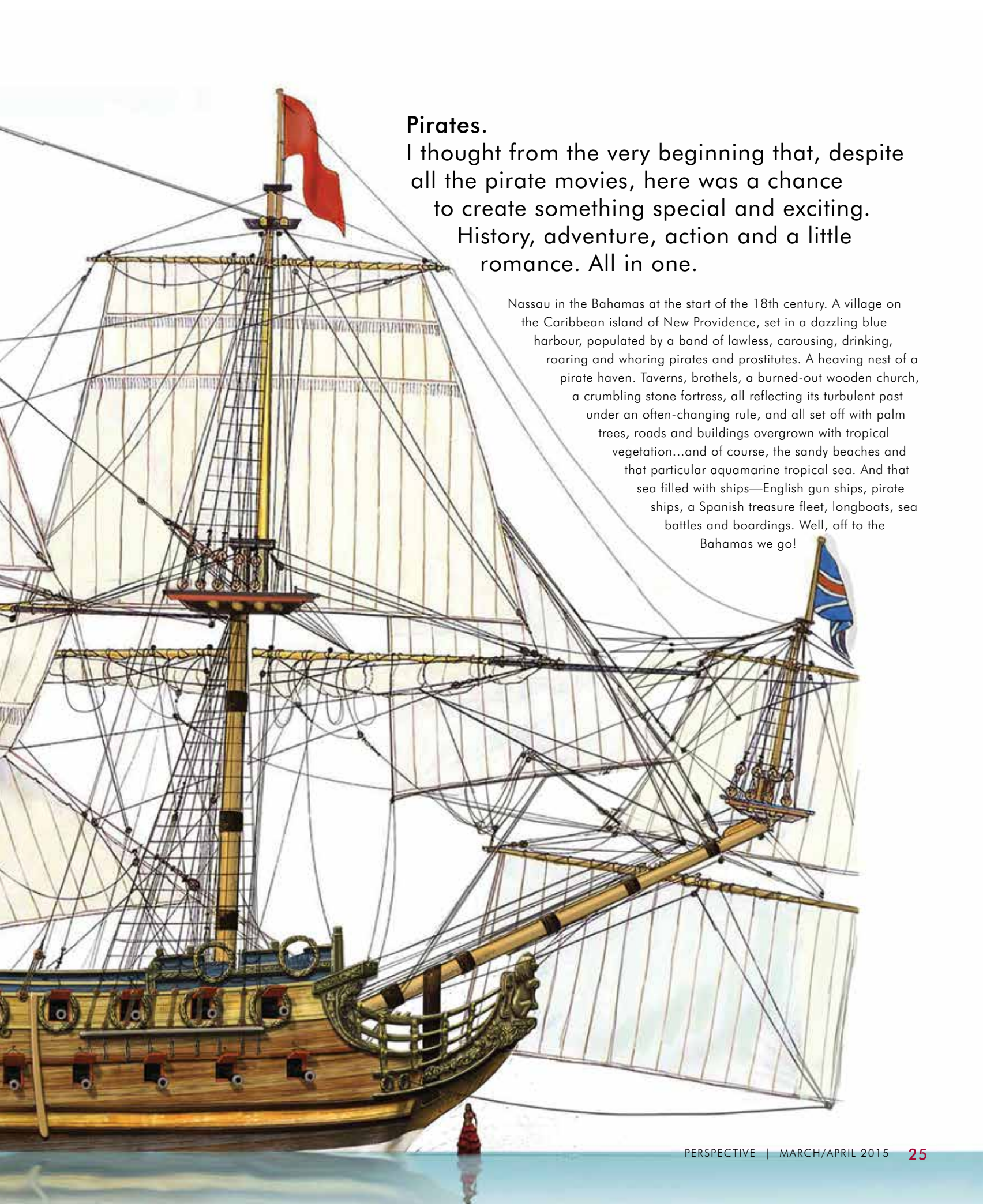
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BLACK SAILS

by Wolf Kroeger, Production Designer





Pirates.

I thought from the very beginning that, despite all the pirate movies, here was a chance to create something special and exciting. History, adventure, action and a little romance. All in one.

Nassau in the Bahamas at the start of the 18th century. A village on the Caribbean island of New Providence, set in a dazzling blue harbour, populated by a band of lawless, carousing, drinking, roaring and whoring pirates and prostitutes. A heaving nest of a pirate haven. Taverns, brothels, a burned-out wooden church, a crumbling stone fortress, all reflecting its turbulent past under an often-changing rule, and all set off with palm trees, roads and buildings overgrown with tropical vegetation...and of course, the sandy beaches and that particular aquamarine tropical sea. And that sea filled with ships—English gun ships, pirate ships, a Spanish treasure fleet, longboats, sea battles and boardings. Well, off to the Bahamas we go!



Previous pages: A colored starboard side elevation of the HMS Scarborough. Most of the working drawings of ships were based on 3D CAD studies of 18th century vessels done by Richard Braithwaite, a naval architect based in Plymouth in the UK. **Top:** A preliminary pencil drawing of the harbour at Nassau on New Providence Island in the Bahamas. **Above, left:** The Art Department's highly detailed study model of the harbour. **Right:** A production photograph of the finished set, built on the backlot at Cape Town Film Studios in Cape Town, South Africa.

Not. In true show business fashion, off to Cape Town, South Africa, we went. Not to beaches, but to the middle of nowhere, the outskirts of town on a newly created backlot and soundstages located in landlocked semiarid scrubland...which paradoxically turns to marshland for six months of the year during the rainy season.

But actually, great, free reign on an empty canvas. What a challenge. What fun. Nothing more boring for a designer than having to shoot on existing locations.

Having spent most of my years working on sets for motion pictures, designing a television miniseries was something totally new for me. I got around that by approaching it as I would a movie and came to realize, perhaps because of that approach, that technically there's not that much difference anymore between a good movie and a good television show.

As usual, in the beginning, lots of research and the first rough sketches. The story was to be based on a mixture of historical facts out of which the fiction and fantasy could grow.



For various reasons, including security, environmental restrictions, travel times and cost, it was a good idea to keep our main town on the backlot...except we didn't have an ocean.

Fortunately, the studio had already committed to building a tank for the yet-to-be-designed ship and it emerged that this was to be fed and filtered via a reservoir tank, the construction of which was not yet underway. The reservoir tank offered a wonderful opportunity to create Nassau on the water. For relatively little additional cost, one hundred meters of beachfront could be created that even had a controllable tide.

Now that we had an ocean, I could start designing the town and landscape that was to interface with it. I

wanted Nassau to be sensorially real, with humidity, heat and associated tropical decay, the wear and tear of a war-ravaged and largely un-maintained town. To achieve this, I referenced elements of the architecture and colour palette of decaying buildings in Cuba. Nassau had been variously occupied, and attacked, by both the French and the Spanish prior to the show's period when it was a gloriously independent pirate republic.

As always, I allow my thinking to emerge through a drawing process, and developed an ideal view of the town which then became almost a blueprint reference for the individual buildings and the environment in general. It was also a great way of opening up a dialogue with the scriptwriter/show runner Jon Steinberg.

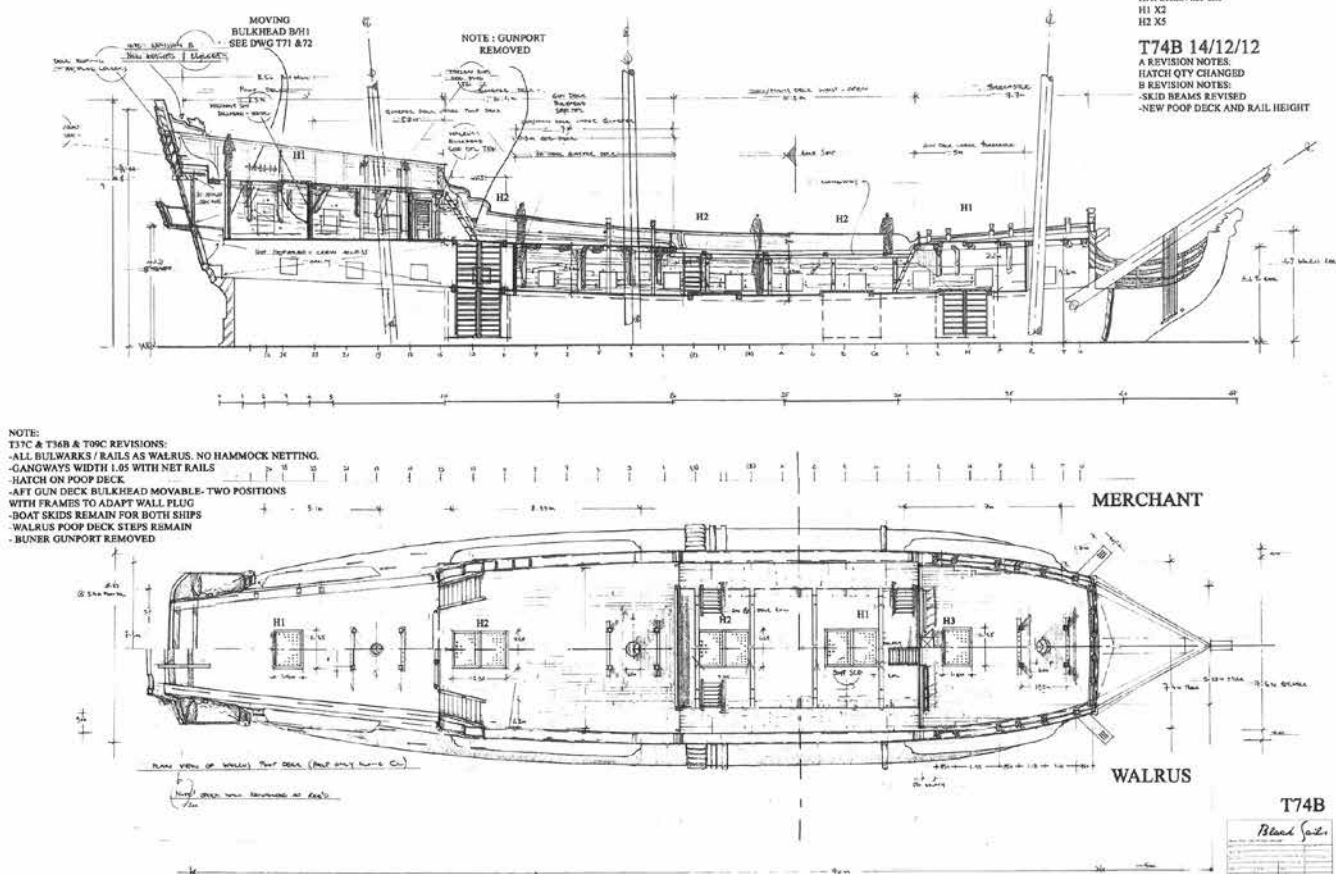
Top: Sunlight studies were done by positioning the harbour model next to the Art Department window. Above, left: The set for the main street of Nassau. Many of the buildings have integral interiors. Right: An overview of the backlot, showing the harbour set and the tank for the ships. Cape Town's surrounding mountains in the distance had to be removed digitally for a believable Caribbean island.

This blueprint was then broken down into individual buildings that were transformed into construction drawings by Art Director Jonathan Hely-Hutchinson. The drawings would also be issued to the Model Makers who were furiously trying to complete the model ahead of the civil engineers, who in turn wanted to landscape the beachfront for the town (which is also their reservoir) in order to complete their contract with its attendant pipes, filters and pumps associated with moving and cleaning in excess of five million liters of water. They were applying pressure as they had a contractual completion date that was resolutely independent of our time frame. The role of coordinating with the engineers and their construction company fell to Supervising Art Director Christophe Dalberg, who managed to coax out the sculptor that hides within every engineer and earth-moving equipment operator. About four thousand cubic meters of sand was pushed around to create the form of the ocean and beach. About the same volume of beach sand was trucked in (380 ten-ton truckloads) to create the beach and line the ocean floor to give us that azure tropical water.

“A village on the Caribbean island of New Providence, set in a dazzling blue harbour, populated by a band of lawless, carousing, drinking, roaring and whoring pirates and prostitutes. A heaving nest of a pirate haven. Taverns, brothels, a burned-out wooden church, a crumbling stone fortress, all reflecting its turbulent past under an often-changing rule.”

To achieve an organic and messily inhabited look, I set out to create as many opportunities as possible for filming to occur in a total 360-degree environment, thereby reducing the need for CGI, both because of cost and to minimize the textural disconnect between the real and CG worlds. As part of this total-world approach, I also required that as many as possible of the sets be interior/exterior, allowing for uninterrupted movement through them. I located the tavern and brothel sets opposite each other with both having composite interiors to allow writers and directors to





play off action on the street. This worked well as the brothel and tavern together form the commercial center of our town.

The juxtaposition of cultures between the tavern and the brothel was also manifest in their architecture: the brothel a flamboyant, almost Rococo building with strong Spanish roots, and the tavern more reminiscent of English colonial architecture, a little restrained in comparison. This difference was emphasized again with the careful set dressing by Tom Hannam and his team, the tavern feeling almost utilitarian in comparison to the decaying, opium-dream sumptuousness of the brothel.

Ultimately, the town was completed as I had intended through the timely delivery of sets by the carpentry crew (HOD Dave Bastiaans), the fabricating team under Marian Moncek, and the exquisite finishes applied by Liz van den Berg and her Scenic Artists. This was further augmented by rich tropical foliage from the greens department led by Carla Jackson, and all of the above was precisely managed and coordinated by construction manager Clive Pollick.

The studio interior sets were delivered with the same meticulous care but it was here that I could contrast the pirates' world of Nassau with other more civilized places. This was particularly true of Miranda Barlow's farmhouse interior. Here was an opportunity to portray a calm and homely refuge in contrast to a bawdy and bloody pirate world.

There were of course, occasions when it was necessary to leave the backlot in order to open up the film to more varied scenery. This was great, inasmuch as it allowed one to design into a new environment and expand the basic world and its characters further. Most expressive of these was the baymen's camp which I built around an abandoned water reservoir in the form of a excavated crater. The baymen are timbermen by occupation (and mean by inclination). I had a load of fun creating an appropriately gothic edifice which was their camp. Infinitely less anarchic but hugely important, given the screen time, character support and identity, was Miranda Barlow's farmhouse exterior. The location was chosen for its closeness—little more than a mini-move for the unit—its row of mature trees, there being none on the backlot, and its general sense of inhabited agrarian space which helped to ground and anchor the set. There was again the need to create a 360-degree environment for the same reasons as above, but also to obscure as much as possible of South Africa's ubiquitous mountains, which don't exist in the Bahamas.

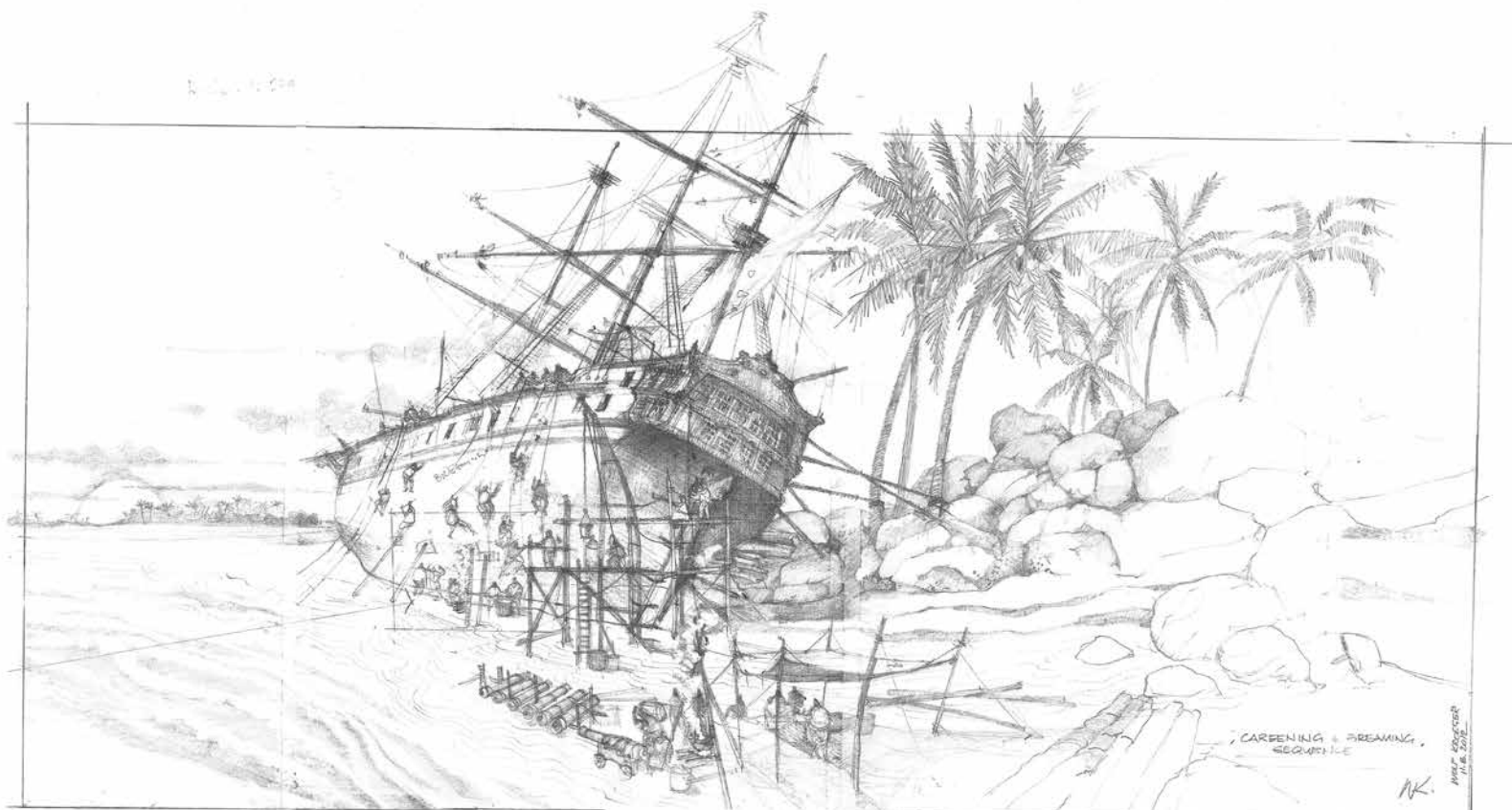
Then of course, there were the ships.

As I mentioned previously, it was determined early that a tank was required. This needed to be sufficiently large to float and maneuver a ship on. Given the shallow water table in winter and to add some elevation above the background landscape, the tank was built on a 6m-tall elevated mound. The tank footprint is 115m x 115m, a little more than two football fields. This includes a 50m x 70m tank, 1.2m deep, with a central 10m x 20m x 4.5m deep stunt and underwater photography portion located centrally within it. The tank is bordered with a 15m-wide access and equipment hard surface on three sides and a 50m x 100m staging area to the fourth side.

The ship's brief was to create a memorable pirate ship, the Walrus, encompassing all the flamboyance, danger, romance and a myriad of other attributes one may associate with pirates. The ship is to be a lead character in itself. Oh, and then it must be capable of simultaneously transforming into any number of dowdy merchant ships. The solution to multiple ships was to build an additional two-thirds of a ship to float in the tank. This ship would consist of a partial gundeck and stern and would be based on the same hull design as the Walrus. This, in theory, would allow alternating the finish elements from one ship to another and, in the case of the Walrus, back again. The full ship it was determined would remain on the hard staging area adjacent to the tank, using the tank water as background as required. The full ship would also need to be self-propelled in order to rotate it to optimize the orientation for water, sun and wind, and it had to be gimbaled to simulate deck movement. All this had to be ready for filming in five months. Easy.



Opposite page, top: Deck plan and elevation drawings of one of the ships, showing how it is to be modified to play as both the Walrus and a British merchant vessel. Center: The two ships under construction. A two-thirds ship floated in the tank, and the full ship played on the hard staging area adjacent to the tank, using the tank water as background, but both could be rotated to control sunlight and moved to shoot two ships close to one another. Bottom: The two ships, both dressed as the Walrus, showing the extensive detailing designed and constructed for these beautiful vessels. This page, top: Below decks interiors are built on stage at Cape Town Film Studios. Here, the hold of the Walrus is an all-purpose living space with hammocks, gimbaled tables and ship's guns. Above: The gundeck is built on stage as well.



Top: Production Designer Wolf Kroeger's pencil sketch of the Walrus careened on a beach for a process called breaming—softening the pitch on the hull and scraping off shells and other matter that has adhered to the ship. Above: A screen capture of the scene shows the kind of contribution that the Emmy-winning visual effects team regularly provides to BLACK SAILS. Only a small portion of the hull was actually present on the South African beach for this scene; the topsides and rigging are a set extension.

work of Richard Braithwaite, a naval architect based in Plymouth in the UK. Richard, out of curiosity, had modeled the hull of the HMS Southhampton, an 18th century, 140-foot frigate, in a 3D CAD® program in order to conduct flow tests and establish hull resistance. We were also fortunate (and extremely grateful) that Richard allowed us use of his model.

The model was perfect as it provided a fairly neutral shape that could revert to various other ship configurations while also allowing Dave Bastiaans, our resident CAD fiend, to extract construction frame profiles for building the full-sized hull. He could further build onto and amend the 3D model toward a version of the Walrus, which included the addition of fore and quarter decks and a significant opening up of the gundeck, amongst a multitude of finer carpentry

The time frame meant that research and design had to be hugely compressed and it was determined, along with construction manager Pollick, that the best way to achieve this was to find an already existing design on which to base the ship.

We were lucky to stumble upon the

details. This model was ultimately handed over to the visual effects artists and became the basis of their fully rendered CG Walrus.

While ship frame construction was progressing in a studio workshop under the supervision of boatbuilder/mariner Gary Brown (yes, the man has built any number of sailing craft, both actual sea-faring and film-set varieties), the mechanized frame to carry and gimbal the ship was being designed and built by steel construction HOD Alex Wheeler: a purpose-built chasis with eight crabbing wheels, hinged along its length to accommodate the eight-degree gimbal movement provided by a hydraulic ram; bearing in mind that this was to carry, move and animate a 120-ton live load 18th century three-masted ship, more often than not under full sail.

Meanwhile, the Art Department, under the supervision of Christophe and the research and design capabilities of Art Director Cat Palmer and Brian Glazer, was furiously researching appropriate period detailing for the ship's wheels, fighting tops, gun'als, capstans, galleries, figureheads and the multitude of other parts that adorn and make up the whole. This research was then turned into working drawings which were issued to Gary Brown and his team for the exterior ships and to Herbie Adler for the fabrication of the studio-based interiors, including below decks and Captain's cabin sets, both of which needed to be transformed into various ships. To achieve this, I designed the cabin with mobile panels and a piece of mast which allowed the



space to be reconfigured. This was augmented by paint (when time permitted) and dressing changes. The below decks set was designed as a continuous ninety-foot hold including the bow which allowed, with the use of flying panels and dressing, to create various sets such as cabins or a ship's galley.

Concurrent with this was the research and detailing of sculptural elements adorning the prow and gallery. The detail design of these elements fell principally to Illustrator Fred Mpuuga who is blessed with a deft and expressive pencil and was best suited for conveying the sense of form and body to sculptor Angela MacPherson and her team. They in turn would hand over their repeat originals to Marian, for molding, duplication and application down to the finest detail, ranging from coats of arms on the canons to barnacles around the waterline.

Simultaneous again with this was the sail and rigging design and fabrication. This was headed up by master rigger Josh Spencer from the UK, who has acquired over many years an encyclopedic knowledge of antique sailing vessels and their attendant rigging, along with a very practical, experience-based knowledge of how to form/splice/braid and otherwise assemble the rigging components including ratlines, blocks, cleats, etc. Josh and his team of tall ship riggers were responsible for fabricating, installing and ultimately raising the sails, and they additionally managed the everyday sailing of the landlocked ships.

Capping all of this, and ultimately providing the unifying touch to all of these various components was the scenic finishing which gives life and history to the finished ship, from the weathered timbers, worn foot treads and handrails to the corroded metalwork and

Top: Another visual effects composite, this time of the two ships with water plates, created—like all of the series' effects shots—by Crazy Horse Effects in Venice, CA. Below, left and right: The same stage set used for the Captains' cabins on two different ships, changed with dressing, paint and limited architectural modifications.



Right: A pencil concept sketch for the baymen's camp, the home and worksite for a highly mobile band of land-based privateers who erected their huts in the vicinity of the logwood or mahogany that they harvested for sale. They abandoned these temporary sites as soon as they needed another node of trees to cut. Below: A photograph of the completed set, built around the excavated crater of an abandoned water reservoir.



Wolf Kroeger, Production Designer
Christophe Dalberg, Supervising Art Director
Jonathan Hely-Hutchinson, Catherine Palmer, Mark Walker,
 Art Directors
Ed Babb, Joe Pistorius, Msizi Sishi, Conceptual Designers
Justin Goby Fields, Concept Artist
Frederick Mpuuga, Illustrator
Catherine Gaum, Ross Jenkin, Gary McMonnies, Draughtsmen
Mark Risk, Storyboard Artist
Liz van den Berg, Head Scenic Artist
Tom Hannam, Set Decorator

weathered ropes and sails, again all exquisitely realized by Liz van den Berg and her team.

Props on a period show are always challenging and *Black Sails*, spanning global cultures in both its characters and story locations, is no exception. The task of breaking down the vast range of props, from carts, carriages and boats to personal props and weapons, and exploring their particular character and usage relative to a particular cast member or location, fell to props master Egbert Kruger. Egbert also briefs the armourers, fabricators, calligraphers, printers, bookbinders, leatherworkers, metalworkers, jewelers, prosthetic artists and whoever else may be required to achieve the show's demands.

In terms of weaponry, we were fortunate to secure the services, vast knowledge and edged weaponry of History in the Making (again outside of Portsmouth in Hampshire) and their swordmaster Hamish MacLeod. Firing weapons were supplied by Fire Arms and enthusiastically supervised by the father-and-son team of Bruce and Brian Wentzel, who again have an extraordinary depth of knowledge and will keep offering innovative solutions which they can back up with research from the period.

Film and television may be technically the same, but the time and money available for design, construction and set dressing is another matter (but then again there's never enough time or money on any project). So is the number of directors one



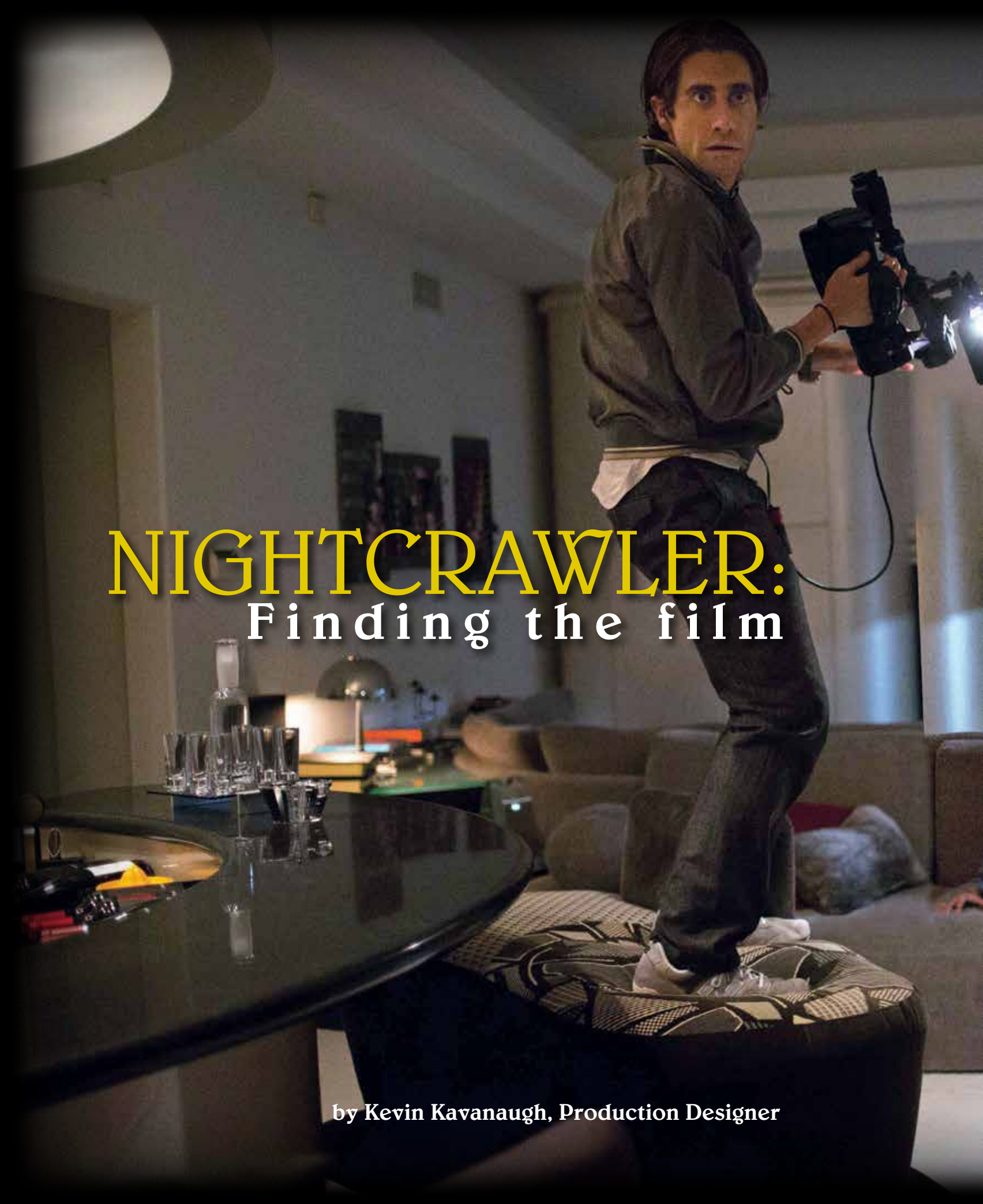
has to work with, each with a different approach, style, personality and experience. Not to mention the eight scripts, generating almost seven hours of edited footage—nearly four regular movies. And consequently meetings, so many meetings. Add to that the accelerated shooting schedule and the constant transformation of sets in new episodes and the occasional out-of-sequence episodes that can trip one up on continuity, compounded by a second unit doing pickups on sets already changed to something else. Fortunately, I had another Art Director, Mark Walker (aka List Guy), who managed to keep track of the constantly shifting goal posts. A lot of sets had to be designed without a script or a director. Intuition

and guesswork played a big part, as did trying to build in flexibility to accommodate unforeseen requirements and provide new opportunities for directors and cinematographers in often-visited key sets.

Ultimately, I had a lot of fun, and so I hope did everyone else. **ADG**

Above: The simple farmhouse of the mysterious Miranda Barlow, confidant and lover of the pirate captain James Flint. Below: A view of the Cape Town Film Studios backlot from the rear. In the center is the main street of Nassau in front of the large tank with its two ships. To the right is the reservoir tank that filters and feeds the large tank. The reservoir is edged with nearly 4,000 tons of white sand which gives the water a typical Caribbean azure hue.



A man with long dark hair, wearing a grey jacket and dark pants, stands on a patterned ottoman in a dimly lit living room. He holds a professional video camera with a bright light attached, looking back over his shoulder with a surprised expression. In the foreground, a round black table holds several glasses and a bottle. The background shows a couch and framed pictures on the wall.

NIGHTCRAWLER:

Finding the film

by Kevin Kavanaugh, Production Designer



Photographs by Chuck Zlotnick © Open Road Pictures



The varied landscapes of Los Angeles—the fabrics of the different neighborhoods—this city would be more than just a backdrop in *Nightcrawler*. The central character Louis Bloom (Jake Gyllenhaal) would come down from the surrounding hills at night like a coyote looking for whatever scraps he could find to survive, an opportunist who would do anything to be successful in his own deranged mind.



Although a first-time director, Dan Gilroy was no novice to the filmmaking process. He's been around the industry for more than twenty years as a writer (*The Bourne Legacy*, *Real Steel*, among others). When he first spoke with me about the film, we discussed portraying Los Angeles, the city itself, as a character in the movie. He described an overhead view of Los Angeles at night, an image of glowing sparkles of light that consume the vast square mileage that encompasses the city. However, what intrigued him was not the lights but the darkness that emanates from the ocean, the desert and the mountains surrounding the city. At night, Los Angeles is an island of glowing white noise, alive with energy, in a sea of black. This idea, Los Angeles as one big sparkling canvas where the lost soul, Louis Bloom, roams around at night, intrigued me. I would have to re-discover the city again, to get lost in a familiar home, in order to find this film.



Previous pages, left: At a location in Granada Hills, Louis Bloom (Jake Gyllenhaal) stumbles onto a murder scene before the police arrive and films the maid dead on the couch for the local news station. Right, top to bottom: At the Venice Beach boardwalk, director Dan Gilroy and Jake Gyllenhaal discuss the scene where Louis steals a bicycle to pay for his first police scanner and camcorder. The parking lot on Sunset Boulevard in front of Angelino's Bakery in Echo Park looks a lot less dramatic in the daytime location photograph than it does in the actual footage filmed at night where Louis and his new partner Rick (Riz Ahmed) are listening to the police scanner waiting for a crime to happen. This illustrates why scouting this kind of scene needs to be done at night. Opposite page, top: On the stage set of the fictional KWLX news with its translight backing of the Los Angeles skyline, Louis and news director Nina (Rene Russo) discuss the business of late-night stringers. Bottom: On Sunset Boulevard outside of the KTLA 5 studios, Louis finishes up editing the night's work before selling it to Nina at KWLX. This page, left: A model by Art Director Naaman Marshall, built with foam, plaster, paint and a heat gun, of a head-on crash scene on Mulholland Drive where Louis moves a dead body for a more dramatic shot. Bottom, left and right: Laurel Canyon Boulevard in Burbank, where Louis chases after the cops and a SUV, filming a crash sequence.

I anticipated that scouting would come easily to me since I grew up in Los Angeles in a time before GPS and the Google Maps app. Back then, all I had was a thick, torn and battered *Thomas Guide of Los Angeles and Surrounding Counties*. I kept this book stuffed under my driver's seat ready to be pulled out at any moment to prevent me from getting lost. During the early years, navigating this spider's web of endless avenues, boulevards and freeways is how I got to know Los Angeles. Nowadays, it's easy not to get lost. For *Nightcrawler*, I needed to learn how to get lost again. So that's what I did. At night, I would

spend hours driving the streets and searching the neighborhoods from Hollenbeck Park, to the hills of Glendale and down to the Los Angeles river basin at Atwater Village. I would ride down Sunset Boulevard enjoying the bright lights of Dodger Stadium over Echo Park during the Dodgers playoff run, then onward to the South Bay and endless parallel streets like Hawthorne and Prairie Boulevards. I was washed ashore in the ebb and flow of the city at night. These intersections, neighborhoods, 24-hour laundromats, late-night taco trucks and Korean BBQ stands would be the sets and locations—and characters—for this film.





Top: Set Designer Aaron Haye's rendered 3D Maya® model of the news set, later changed to KWLA 6. **Above:** The finished set on Stage 1 at the old KCET Studios on Sunset Boulevard in east Hollywood. **Below, left and right:** Nina giving Louis a tour of the KWLA studios. The stage, one of the oldest in Hollywood, belonged to Monogram Pictures and Allied Artists before KCET moved there in the 1970s.

These nights became sort of a routine for me. During the day I would work in the office relaying to the Art Department team what I and the location scouts had found the night before. Soon, I decided to get everyone involved in the process. I told the Art Department one morning that each and every member needed to go out and find at least one location for themselves. And, that's what happened. We all began to see more than just an endless desert of concrete and mind-numbing sodium vapor lights. We began to appreciate the locations as characters in the story, alongside the actors. In the first few weeks, I couldn't wait for the sun to set and the traffic to abate so that I could get back on the road and get lost again. Scouting takes patience and determination. The right location will speak to you in a familiar way; it will become clear in your head and the abstract becomes real. You will see the scene take place in front of you. I found that each of us





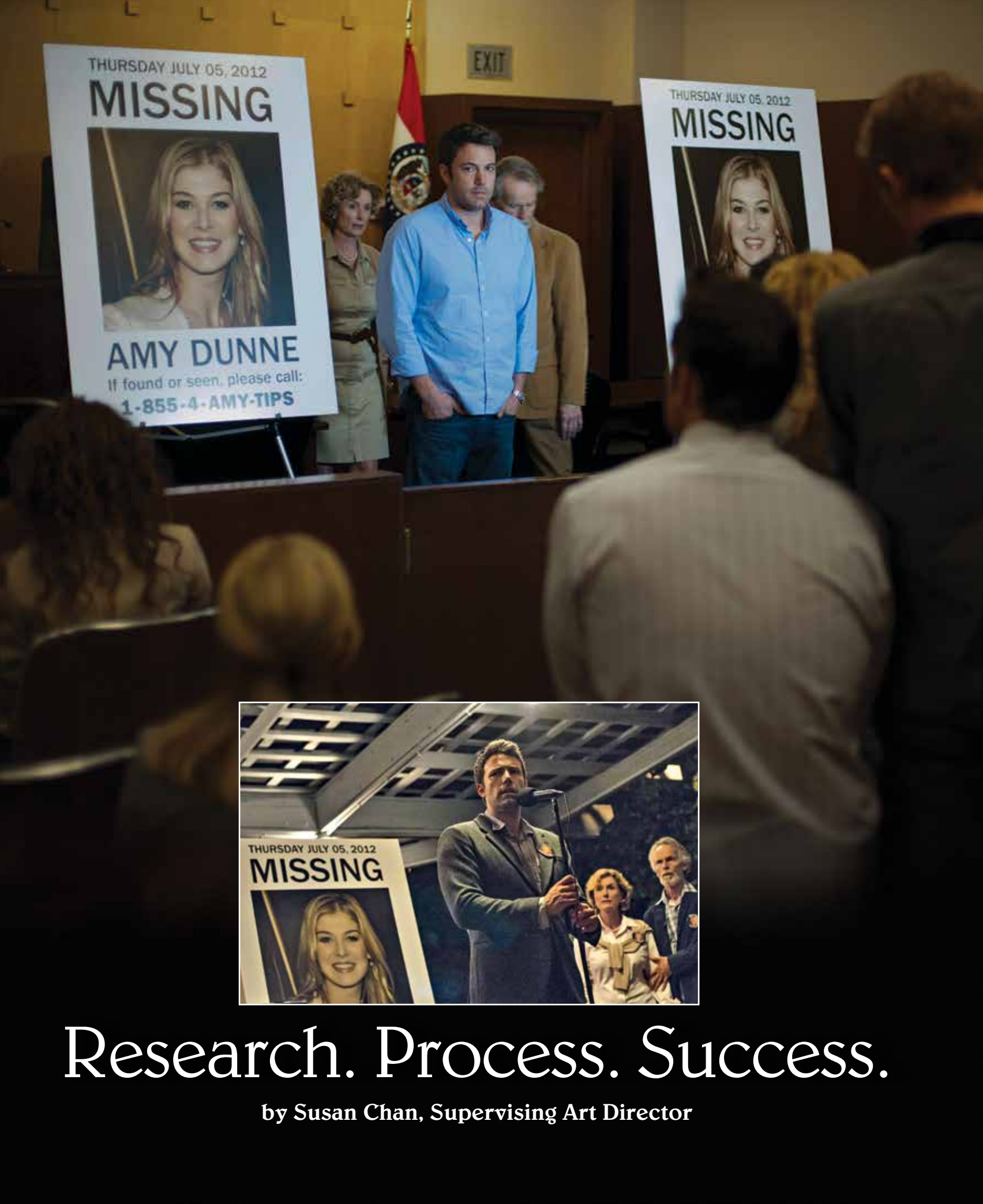
“I was washed ashore in the ebb and flow of the city at night. These intersections, neighborhoods, 24-hour laundromats, late-night taco trucks and Korean BBQ stands would be the sets and locations—and characters—for this film.”

has a unique story of why we are here in Los Angeles. Some of us were born and raised here; some of us are descendants of immigrants and travelers looking for a home and an opportunity to be successful. I realized that to understand this city and this film, I had to look past the endless streets in order to find the real fabric of Los Angeles. Re-discovering the neighborhoods, people and places became the spark that ignited the design process. Sometimes you just need to get lost. **ADG**

Kevin Kavanaugh, Production Designer
Naaman Marshall, Art Director
Meg Everist, Set Decorator



Top: At the murder house in Granada Hills, Louis stumbles onto a bloody scene and films it before the police arrive. **Above:** The opening scene at an industrial yard in Boyle Heights with Los Angeles in the background—OZ like—where Louis Bloom scavenges around a chain-link fence like a coyote coming down from the hills.



Research. Process. Success.

by Susan Chan, Supervising Art Director

I was struck, on the first day of work on *Gone Girl*, by the fact that neither Production Designer Don Burt nor director David Fincher spends a lot of time explaining the whys and hows of achieving the right sets. The Art Department just dives directly into their Process that includes the careful culling of lots of research and equally careful listening to what Fincher and Burt said about their choices. It was as if long before we all arrived to take part in our portion of the Process, Fincher had completely worked out what the world of the book was all about. The Process became one of teasing his take into reality.

I was (of course) delighted when Don invited me to join the Art Department and expected that the novel (I hadn't read it) had to contain a high level of complexity to interest David Fincher. I'd seen most of his movies, and in each one a distinct and highly specific world is embodied. These worlds are wholly different from one another, yet they are somehow cohesive. They are clearly all the creations of a single director.

The key design objective was to create the stages on which Amy and Nick Dunne's play of a marriage would unfold. Amy and Nick wear many masks as they go through their courtship and marriage. These masks both hide and illuminate fundamental aspects of their personas. So, the house that they share in Carthage, Missouri, is a perfectly appointed McMansion, but lacks the warmth of a home. Amy is superficially an ideal girlfriend, wife and companion but somehow cold, just like her home. Amy's office is perfect in an Ethan Allen home office kind of way, complete with a shrine to her alter ego, Amazing Amy, the children's book character based on her life that her parents made their fortunes fictionalizing from the real Amy's shortcomings. She both despises and depends upon that character for her self-definition.

Nick's home office contains nods to his happier, more productive past in New York as a men's magazine writer. Unlike the rest of the perfectly tidy house, which bears Amy's stamp, his space contains a messy assortment of items. They give insight into Nick's taste: jazz posters, a vintage stereo receiver and turntable, a collection of LPs, vintage moon posters (think school maps). His decorating choices were designed to convey that he's a likeable guy with pastimes and interests, whereas Amy is something of an enigma. Also prominent in his office are pointed reminders that he still hasn't become the novelist that Amy thought she had married. In addition to his empty "ideas" bin is a big television.

A major theme in the film is the way in which reputation is made or broken through the filter of mainstream television news. Almost every major set includes a television as a focal point and characters are



Opposite page: A press conference at the courthouse, one of the first appearances of the Amy Dunne missing poster, shot on location in Culver City. Inset: A candlelight vigil for Amy, shot on location in Cape Gerardo, Missouri. Left: Some of Graphic Designer Adam Khalid's fictional news outlet logo designs (and real news outlet logos), interspersed with his mockup illustrations of the ways the logos should appear on news vans.



Above: The interior of Amy and Nick's living room, a set built on stage at Red Studios in Hollywood. **Opposite page, top left:** The living room dressed as a crime scene. The set was designed with a very open plan for shooting and to reflect the McMansion style of the house. **Right, top to bottom:** Amy and Nick's entry foyer. No backings were used with this or the other stage sets, only green screen; backgrounds were digitally composited during postproduction. Amy and Nick's kitchen was also part of the complex of stage sets. Amy creates her diary in her home office. All three images show sets built on stage at Red Studios.

repeatedly confronted with versions of themselves in the media. These confrontations drive their actions in one direction or another. Nick's twin sister Margo's home

However, the ubiquitous television in Margo's home becomes a wedge between these closest of siblings, raising doubts in Margo's mind of his innocence.

“The key design objective was to create the stages on which Amy and Nick Dunne’s play of a marriage would unfold. Amy and Nick wear many masks as they go through their courtship and marriage. These masks both hide and illuminate fundamental aspects of their personas.”

is a safe haven for him for a period and the design and dressing of the space conveyed all the comfort and warmth missing from the house he and Amy share.

Even in the Carthage Police Station set, which did not have a television, the influence of media is felt when the missing-persons poster for Amy Dunne is unveiled. A simple image coupled with the right expression on Nick Dunne's face serves to define him as a certain kind of callous husband. The design of the poster was a nuanced process with Fincher requesting changes to the photo, the text and the color correction until he arrived at just the right version. The first stills for the movie that were released contained this poster and all the work that went into it was clear in the final product. The poster is a perfect distillation of what is consistently true in Fincher's work: the final product doesn't appear labored despite the many steps taken to get to the end. It just looks and feels right.

Detective Boney is the skeptical voice throughout the film and perhaps the only character that doesn't seem to be influenced by the television media. None of the sets that she inhabits contains a television set; instead,



she pieces together the clues to Amy's disappearance with a straightforward focus on what she believes to be facts. These clues are often found in hidden places where people don't go: an old basement, an abandoned mall, the woodshed behind Go's house and Amy's closet. The plot of the movie requires that the audience believes that the trail of clues is legitimate. The locations where they turn up had to be seamless, complete and instantly, psychologically plausible.

The cuts in the film happen very quickly so the sets needed to support this style of shooting and editing. In Papa Dunne's basement, the stairs leading down almost direct the detectives to the old furnace where Amy's diary is found. Go's woodshed is located just below a small rise in the backyard location, leading the eye down to it naturally and giving a vantage point from which to be drawn to its contents. Similarly, the Abandoned Mall is accessed via a long, tall derelict escalator that brings the detectives down into the bowels of a cavernous space that then closes in tighter to the spot where Boney learns of Amy's attempt to buy a gun. The physical narrative of the set elements, coupled with Fincher's camerawork and editing





Top: Set Designer Tom Taylor's construction drawings for Desi's lake house bedroom/bathroom set, built on stage at Red Studios to match the detailing on the location house in Missouri. **Above, left:** Desi's dining room, shot on location in Cape Gerardo, Missouri. **Right:** Desi's living room, also on location in Cape Gerardo.

choices, work nicely to bring the audience, as well as the detectives, to the clues.

The work in the last key sets of the movie are exercises in knitting practical locations, containing lots of detail, with sets on stage that had to be equal in richness. Like almost all of the sets, the exteriors for The Hideaway Cabins in the Ozarks where Amy waits for Nick to be charged with her murder, were shot on location in Missouri or Virginia. The interiors were built at Red Studios along with the interiors for Amy and

Nick's house, Go's house, Papa Dunne's kitchen and basement, and Desi Collings' lake house bedroom and bathroom. The work in Missouri comprised the first four weeks of principal photography and the sets on stage were being built simultaneously with the location filming. The Missouri Art Department fed details back to Los Angeles, and they were immediately dialed into the sets as they were being drawn and built.

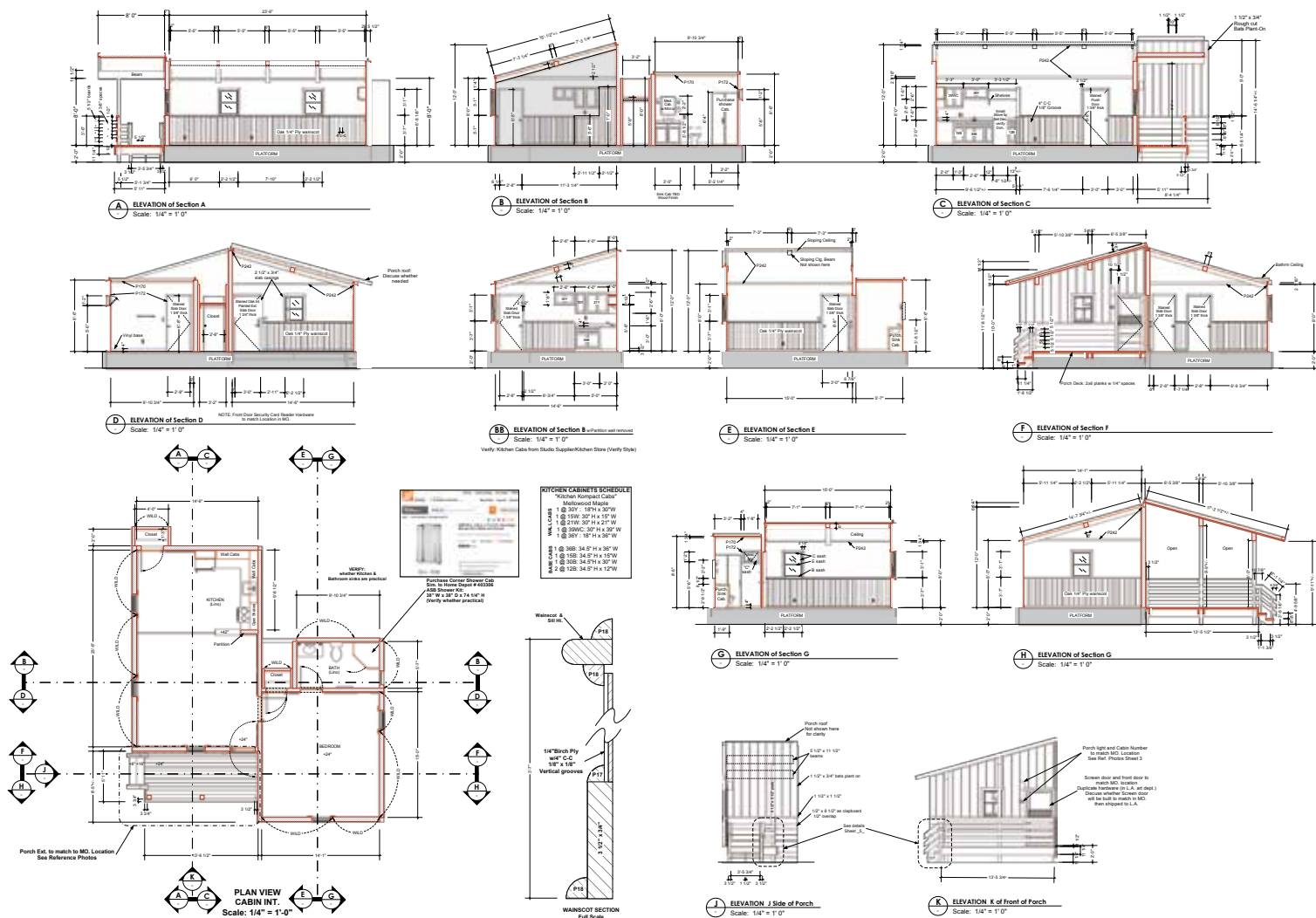
The search for Desi's lake house interior started in Los Angeles, looking for a practical location, and ended



by knitting together an exterior and interior in Missouri with a built set on stage. This house is pivotal to the plot and had many complex shooting requirements including a very intense and violent murder preceded by surveillance camera footage that Fincher wanted to shoot with real surveillance cameras and without cheating on angles. In the final film, it is virtually impossible to tell where the built set and the real location begin and end. The surveillance camerawork knits nicely into the layout and architecture of the house.

I had never encountered this much emphasis on research for a film set in contemporary America. As I worked on the film, I came to realize that the depth of research is essential to the Process that Fincher puts his crew through. Without it, you can't come even close to fundamentally understanding the world of his film the way he does.

Above, left: The interior of Amy's hideaway cabin set built on stage at Red Studios. This set was redressed to play as Greta's Cabin. Right: The exterior of the hideaway cabin was shot on location at Giant City Lodge in Makanda, Illinois, at the southern tip of the state near Cape Gerardo, Missouri. Below: Tom Taylor's construction drawings for Amy's hideaway cabin stage set.





There was comprehensive research done into the way in which media trucks and crew descend upon timely news events, so that an armada of realistic media trucks could be created to stalk the characters. It was only possible to get clearance to use a few regional news channels; fictional news outlets were created for the majority of the background media and for the two hero networks. This not only enabled the graphics team to develop realistic logos for the picture vehicles, but it also enabled all of us to understand the way local, regional and national media interact at different times in a news event's life cycle. This was very helpful to all departments; the ebb and flow of the media circus was an important secondary character in the film.

“A major theme in the film is the way in which reputation is made or broken through the filter of mainstream television news. Almost every major set includes a television as a focal point and characters are repeatedly confronted with versions of themselves in the media.”

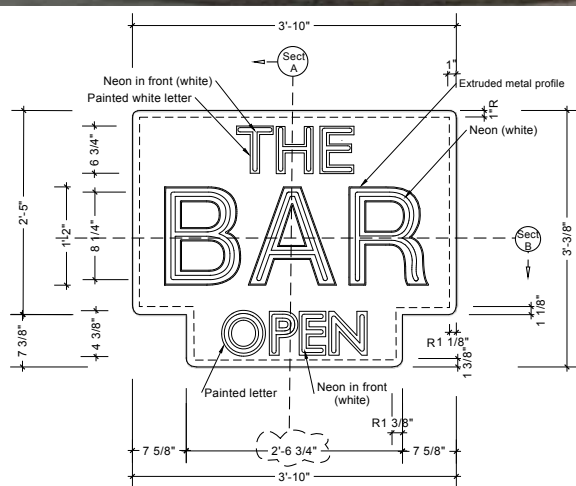
Another unique aspect of David Fincher and Don Burt's approach to set design lies in the use of color. The palette for each of Fincher's films is unique in both hue and value, related to the world that is being conveyed. Fincher knows a lot about cameras and lighting so his notes to the Art Department were always specifically informed by how he would ultimately film the set.

Gone Girl was shot on a RED Epic Dragon, which was only in the prototype stage for this production. Because it has a 6K sensor, the image density and latitude meant that every single nuance of a set would be rendered in crisp super-HD clarity. There was not a lot of room for error in the color choices that Don made and because of his history with Fincher, he was well aware that the director, and cinematographer Jeff Cronenweth, like to light with practical fixtures and don't flood the sets with extra fill lighting. As a result, the value of the set colors needed to be balanced with the light on the actors, and not fight the lower light levels that Fincher favored for this film. Furthermore, wide-ranging hues would draw attention away from the focal point of the scene and were therefore not used.

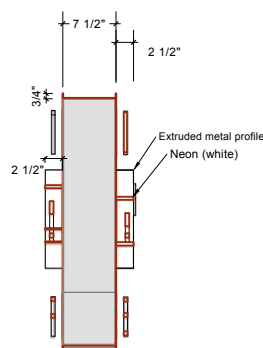
The best aspect of creating sets for a Fincher film is that every change that he makes, big or small, and usually

Top: Papa Dunne's basement stairwell descended straight into the middle of the set on stage at Red Studios. **Above:** A production photograph of Detective Rhonda Boney in Papa Dunne's basement set, where Amy's charred diary is found. **Right:** The woodshed in back of Margo's house where Nick finds all of the items he denies having purchased on his credit cards, built on location in Cape Gerardo.





FRONT ELEVATION
Double faced Neon Can Sign
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"
MAKE ONE - to hang
from outrigger pipe



SIDE VIEW
Section A thru center - looking Left
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"



FRONT ELEVATION
Double faced Neon Can Sign
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"
Paint lightly weathered charcoal/black
Painted letters White
Interior of profile extrusions - White



PLAN VIEW
Section B thru center - looking down
Scale: 1" = 1'-0"



early in the process and not at the last minute, improves the final product. Every day, walking onto the sets to shoot, I never felt as if we had missed anything major or failed to give our director what he needed. The Art Department doesn't get the many takes that Fincher's actors get, so we had to nail it for the moment he rolled that first take. Over the course of five films together, David Fincher and Don Burt have found a Process that works to create a completely seamless world, like the one that was made for *Gone Girl*. **ADG**

Donald Graham Burt,
Production Designer
Susan Chan,
Supervising Art Director
Dawn Swiderski, Art Director
Mark Robert Taylor, Cara Brower,
Assistant Art Directors
Adam Khalid, Dianne Chadwick,
Graphic Artists
Timothy Croshaw, Barbara Mesney,
Thomas T. Taylor, Jane Wu,
Set Designers
Douglas Mowat, Set Decorator

Top: The dressed location for Nick and Margo's bar exterior. The façade and signage were designed and installed on location in Cape Gerardo. Above: Tom Taylor's construction drawings integrating Lead Graphic Designer Andrew Campbell's design for the hero neon sign. The sign itself was built and installed on the location.

50 Years....



Above: Alan Roderick-Jones has had a prolific career, more than 50 years, in the British and American film industries. The graduate of London's Chelsea School of Art began his career with some of the leading British designers. He worked his way up through the apprenticeship system, from draughtsman to continuity sketch artist, to set dresser, then to Assistant Art Director, and eventually, Production Designer and second unit director. His career in film includes twenty-six features, two of which, *STAR WARS* and *NICHOLAS AND ALEXANDRA*, garnered Academy Awards® for Art Direction.

and still going strong

by Alan Roderick-Jones

The other Sunday morning I switched on the television and heard the opening title music by John Barry for *The Lion in Winter*, a film that I worked on way back in 1967. It always awakens and brings forth such wonderful memories of Ireland, Provence, Hepburn, O'Toole, Hopkins, Carcassonne and Arles, where I found myself standing in the very spot where Vincent van Gogh had stood sketching *Hill with the Ruins of Montmajour*. As I drifted back to the 1960s, I realized that I had just passed my fiftieth year in the world of film.

I'd like to share some of the amazing films, and the extraordinary opportunities that I had as a young man, along with the fun of scouting locations, drafting, illustrating, sketching, dressing, directing second units and working as an Art Director.

It was the autumn of 1961 when I left Chelsea School of Art and started as a junior on *The Victors*, a black-and-white war movie. My jaw gaped open as Production Designer Geoffrey Drake took me to the stage on my first day where I witnessed the most striking Italian street, a square covered with American soldiers, jeeps, trucks, scruffy children and village women, along with an actress that took my breath away, Rosanna Schiaffino. "Stand here, Alan," Geoff said, "I will come and see you during the day but I want you to come here every morning for a week, for this is where it all happens." He then introduced me to the director, Carl Foreman, and the cinematographer, Christopher Challis, as his new junior.

On entering *The Victor's* Art Department I was taken aback by the skill of the Illustrator, John Bodimeade, and the Draughtsmen, Wally Smith, Ted Clements and Martin Atkinson, who had all just completed *Lawrence of Arabia* for Production Designer John Box. These men and so many more were to become my mentors during the years that followed.

I purchased a drawing board and would take their plans and elevations home with me to trace. After four years at Chelsea, I was still not prepared or qualified to draught the sets as these men did. I felt so lost at first; but with perseverance I was soon able to help draw some full-size details as well as make the morning coffee and run the drawings to the print room.

Next was *Becket*, *Lord Jim* and even a month of making models on *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Then *Khartoum*, *Carry on Cowboy* and *Catch Us if You Can* with the Dave Clark Five. My first location was on the west coast of Ireland as an Art Director with Anthony Woollard on *We Were Happy Here*. Next came Germany and *The Quiller Memorandum*.





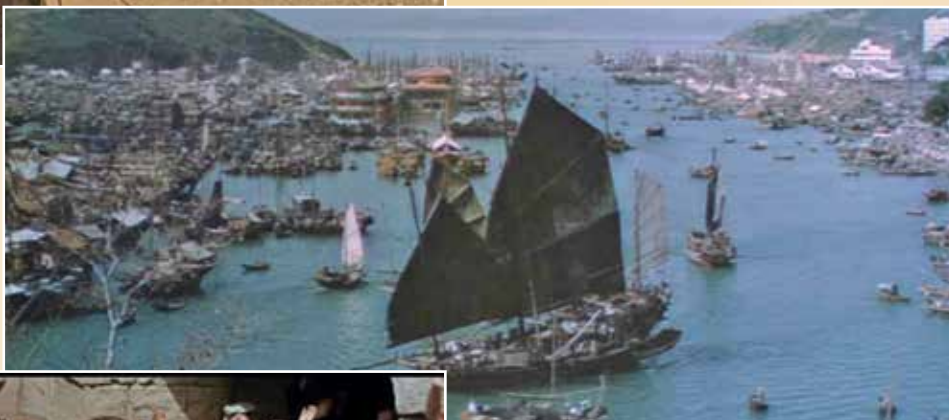
Left: **THE LION IN WINTER** (1968), with Peter O'Toole and Katharine Hepburn; Peter Murton, Art Director; Alan Roderick-Jones, Assistant Art Director.

Right: **NICHOLAS AND ALEXANDRA** (1971), directed by Franklin Schaffner; John Box, Production Designer; Alan Roderick-Jones, Assistant Art Director.



Left: **KHARTOUM** (1966), with Charlton Heston and Laurence Olivier; John Howell, Art Director; Alan Roderick-Jones, Assistant Art Director.

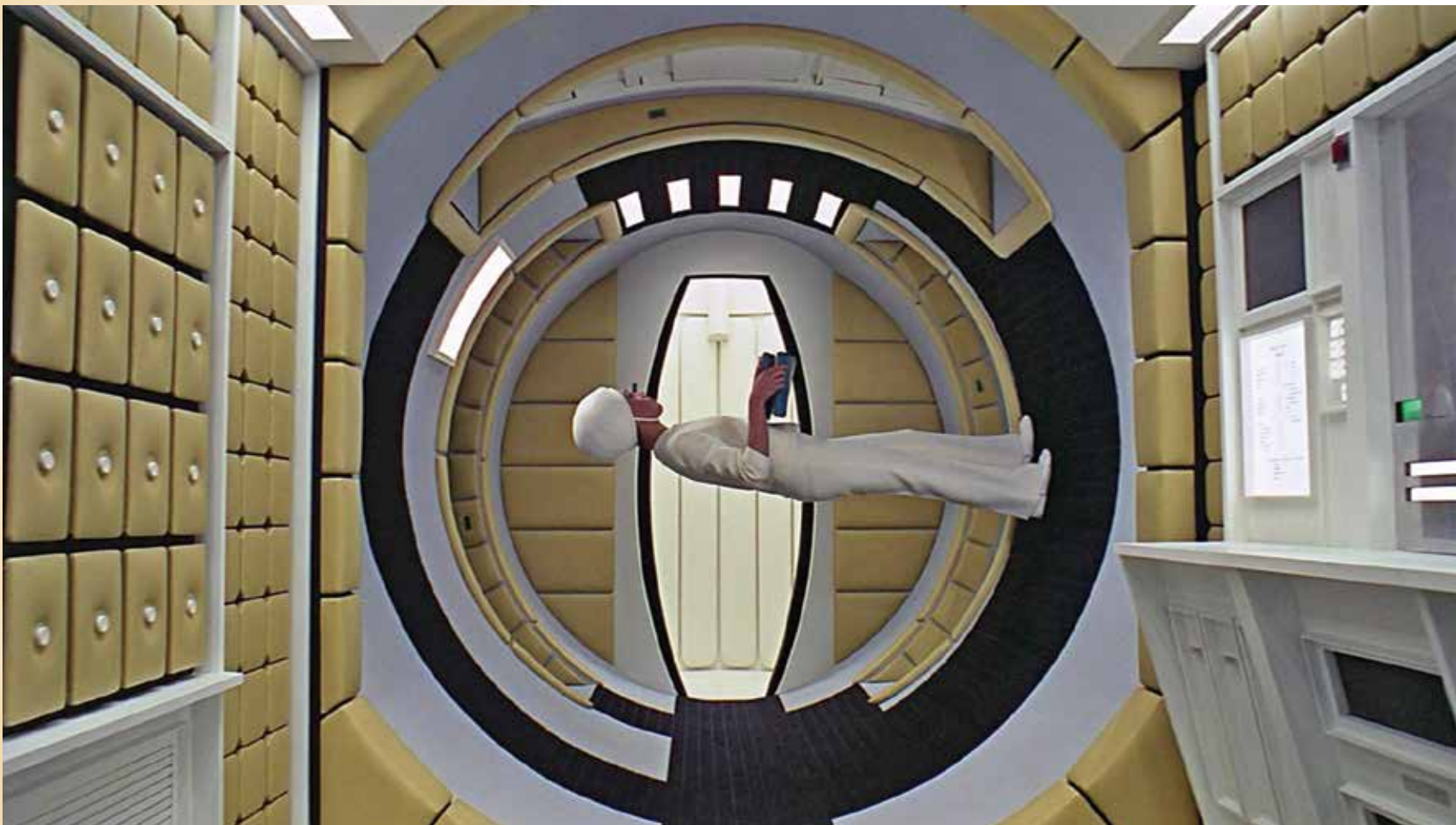
Right: **LORD JIM** (1968), with Peter O'Toole and James Mason; directed by Richard Brooks; Geoffrey Drake, Production Designer; Alan Roderick-Jones, Draughtsman.



Left: **BECKET** (1968), with Richard Burton and Peter O'Toole; John Bryan, Production Designer; Alan Roderick-Jones, Junior Draughtsman.

One day I had a call from Production Designer Don Ashton, who truly became like a father to me. I worked for him on *A Countess From Hong Kong* with Charles Chaplin directing Sophia Loren and Marlon Brando, as well as Sir Richard Attenborough's *Young Winston*. In between films, Norman Reynolds, Peter Childs, Alan and Les Tompkins, John Graysmark and I were all crammed in Don's attic over the garage detailing the interiors for hotels including the Mandarin in Hong Kong, and Sheratons in Bangkok, Cairo and London. Don later took off to Hong Kong where he became Asia's most successful hotel interior designer.

I first met Peter Murton who was assisting Ted Haworth on *Half a Sixpence* on the Shepperton silent stage. Ted introduced us to the first photographic backdrops. A few years later, I was to work with Peter on *The Lion in Winter* and *Nicholas and Alexandra*. Next came *Three Into Two Won't Go*, directed by Peter Hall, starring Rod Steiger and Claire Bloom.

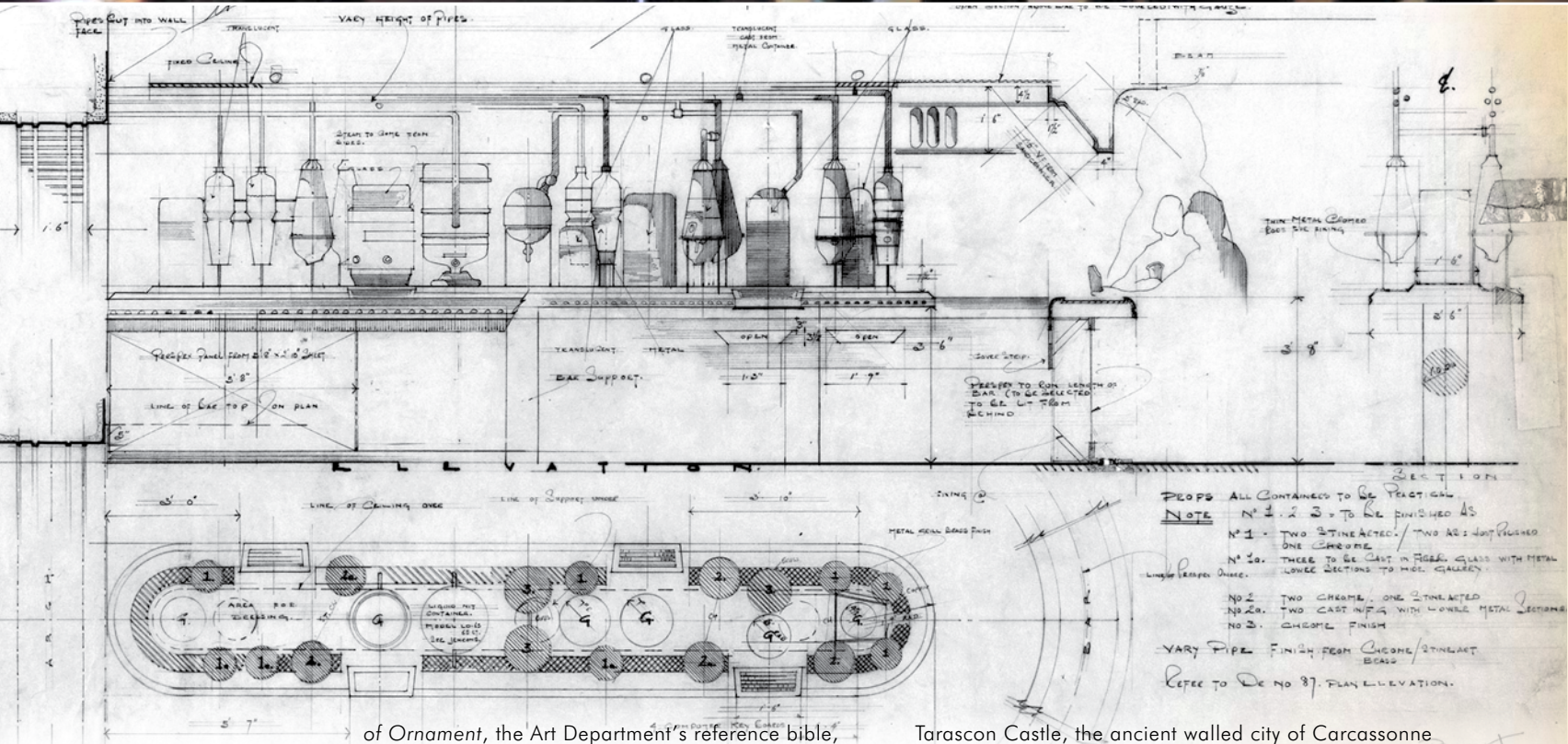


Then I was off to Màlaga, Spain, sketching continuity for the air-to-air and ocean fights for *Fathom*. To my surprise, I ended up directing the second unit as my dear friend Peter Medak who was set to direct, fell very ill. So there I was in an Alouette helicopter for five weeks, flying across mountaintops and low over the Mediterranean.

Within two weeks of returning to London, I was sent to the middle of the African bush with director Henry Hathaway on *The Last Safari*, which was not a great movie, but what an experience: living with forty Maasai, twelve Kikuyu carpenters and a white farmer whom I was told by Art Director Maurice Fowler was to be the construction co-ordinator. We were ahead of the unit living in tents, building villages and a ferry across the hippo-infested river, a treehouse, a landing strip for the crew and, of course, we were surrounded by lion, buffalo, giraffe, wild dogs and baboon, all the while being protected by the amazing gentle warrior Maasai, who would catch fish and occasionally spear a small deer for our dining delight.

After four months in Africa, I went back to London. I bought myself an Alfa Romeo and headed down to Rome to work on *The Adventures of Gerard*. What a feast for the eyes, driving up the Via Apia on the old Roman road, past aqueducts and canopy pines to Cinecitta Studios where Federico Fellini was directing *Satyricon*. *Meyer's Handbook*

Above: 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968), directed by Stanley Kubrick; Anthony Masters, Ernest Archer, Harry Lange, Art Directors; Alan Roderick-Jones, Model Maker.



Tarascon Castle, the ancient walled city of Carcassonne and various other locations in and around the area known as Provence. This was my third film with Peter O'Toole but my first with Katharine Hepburn, and what a joy she was to see every day, such a great professional actress and an inspiration for the crew.

Nicholas and Alexandra, a film set completely in Russia, was my life for two years to the very day. I spent one year at Sam Spiegel's offices in London and a year in Madrid, Spain. Peter Murton was the Production Designer. Vincent Korda, one of the most acclaimed and respected designers in the 1940s would sit and sketch details for us, then place them on our drawing boards. There was one day that I still remember so clearly, I was drawing the interior plans and elevations for the Winter Palace when Vincent leaned over my shoulder,



Left, below: Hand-drawn section and elevation of the cantina at Mos Eisley spaceport from the original STAR WARS (1977), drawn by Alan Roderick-Jones, Assistant to Production Designer John Barry. The interior set was built on stage at Elstree Studios in Hertfordshire, north of central London. Two photographs of the set for the spaceport street on the planet of Tatooine, as they still stand today, a tourist attraction in Tunisia. A stitched horizontal pan, created from frame captures of the cantina interior.

"Alan, there is nothing without light," he quietly said. It didn't hit me then, but later on, designing my own sets, I remembered Vincent's words and designed beams, windows and breaks for light to bring dimension and shadow. I also learned so much from Freddie Young who was the cinematographer on *Lawrence* and with us on *Nicholas*, a great master of his trade. Sadly, Peter left the film and John Box took over as the Designer. I ended up on the floor as the Art Department standby for every moment of the shoot with Franklin Schaffner directing.

I was called into Sam Spiegel's office one day after returning to the stage. "Where were you, Alan? I came to the stage and you were not there," he said. I told him that I had to go to the dentist. "Well, next time you leave the stage you must come and tell me; you are my eyes." Such was the responsibility of the Art Department standby and he wanted me there. His words didn't hit me until much later. I felt I was just doing my job and

was amazed and most flattered at having had him say that to me. *Alexandra* won the Oscar that year for best Art Direction.

One Sunday, a group of us were having our almost weekly Sunday lunch at Don Ashton's Georgian home in Amersham. His two beautiful daughters, Lorraine and Marilyn, Mort Schumann, Peter Lawford and Ava Gardner were there. The phone rang, trouble on the stage. The hanging miniature in the foreground of the Houses of Parliament roof wasn't working. "You drew it up Alan, take care of it," were the next words I heard. Within half an hour, I was climbing the tower that stood in front of the hanging miniature. It seemed the cameraman had the camera on the floor at least three feet to the left of where it should have been. "It cannot be shot, it does not work." I explained to him that it had to be shot from the exact position that I had drawn it from, which was directly in line with the centre of the set below. He could not agree. Next thing I know, the



Right: The Millennium Falcon from STAR WARS, in Docking Bay 94 at Mos Eisley, built on one of the nine stages at Elstree Studios that the film required. Since the Falcon was too large to move out through the stage's elephant doors, the interior of Docking Bay 327 aboard the Death Star was built inside the same stage around the spaceship.



director Richard Attenborough and the producer Carl Foreman were standing with us. I explained the problem and called Don. When he arrived he saw the problem, immediately picked up the camera and asked me where it should be placed. I showed him...he plunked it down and said one word: "Here." He turned on his heel and said, "Come on Alan, we are missing a great lunch," and I followed. That was just one day in the life of *Young Winston*, and that was Don. What a great mentor and teacher in the skills of Design and Art Direction for film.

Soon after *Young Winston*, having had a somewhat... how can I say this...conscious change. (I later heard that people were asking for me, saying things like "Where is Alan?" "Oh! He is in a cave in the Himalayas.") Well, I wasn't. I was on a small twenty-acre farm in Wales with Rachel who later became my wife and life-long companion. There I received a telegram from Jack Mackstead: "Can you come and join us? We are on a project called *Papillon* and Tony Masters is designing. It will all be filmed on location in Jamaica." Next thing I know, at the request of director Franklin Schaffner, I am in Montego Bay. I remember drawing the solitary confinement cells and wondering how could any person come up with anything like this and actually place another human being in it. Tony and Franklin did not like the first cliff top that we had found for Steve McQueen to jump off of, and I was sent to search for alternative locations. I spent more than two weeks flying low over the islands of the Caribbean, even landing in Cuba. Guess what; in the end, the original location was used in the film. I never understood why Steve and Dustin did not get their due

awards for best and supporting actors in *Papillon*. I came to California in 1974 for four months and then returned to Wales, milked the cow, made cheeses, grew organic vegetables and my two children, Ella and Rowan, were born. I designed a few commercials, worked again with Peter Murton and Anthony Pratt on films that were both cancelled, *The Micronauts* and *Young Will Shakespeare*.

Then came a call from John Barry that took me back down to London to EMI Studios for a project called *Star Wars*. Who would have guessed on that day, looking at the three broken-apart fighter planes and the junk in the prop room, that it would all become a part of cinematic history? Although not credited on the first film, I did the work of an Art Director, designing, drafting and dressing the cantina, garage, the exterior of the Millennium Falcon hangar, and so much more. A great time was had by all, and John Barry and the crew were so successful that they received the Oscar for Best Art Direction. John sadly passed away from meningitis whilst preparing the second feature; it was a great loss for the world of film design.

We sold the farm in Wales and arrived in Malibu. It took almost one year before I found myself back on a film, which was mostly due to not being in the union, even though Ted Haworth tried so hard to get me in. The first film working alongside Brian Eatwell took me back to Kenya for one month. I then had a call from production manager Tom Shaw and within a week I was flying with him to Sri Lanka to design *Tarzan*, the Ape Man for John and Bo Derek with Richard Harris. The majority of the locations that Tom and I saw upon



The February/March issue of the STAR WARS INSIDER magazine ran an article on one of the unsung heroes of the franchise—Alan Roderick-Jones.

arriving could only be shot from one angle. With only three weeks to get ready with a local crew, we made do, successfully found what we needed, and—upon arriving—John was more than happy. We ended up in the Seychelles Islands for two weeks, a location that just took one's breath away with the clarity of the ocean and its golden beaches.

I was still unable to join the union. Neither was the cinematographer John Alcott who had recently won an Oscar for *Barry Lyndon*. The two of us found ourselves in Mexico on *Triumphs of a Man Called Horse* working again with Richard Harris with Sandy Howard producing. Upon returning to Los Angeles, I designed *Deadly Force* and *Vamp* that were both shot locally.

Then I was off scouting the coastline of the Adriatic Sea and sailing around the Greek Islands with John and Bo, location hunting again for a film that never saw the light of day, *Pirate Annie*. Next I spent a few months designing commercials, but was soon back with John and Bo, based in Madrid, traveling north, south, east and west of Spain. I flew to London and Rome to prep and to cast a gypsy girl for *Bolero*, a movie that was actually nominated for Worst Film of the Decade.

By the time *Bolero* was completed, I realized that I was barely seeing my family, so I made a choice to design for the world of commercials in Los Angeles. Averaging approximately twenty-five commercials a year from 1985 to 1994, some of which I also directed, I traveled the length and breadth of the continent with various locations in Canada and Mexico. I learned the art of budgeting to almost the penny (as we say in England) and with the previous years of draughting and sketching, found myself able to fulfill all requirements of a designer. It was director and close friend Rick Levine who finally got me signed into the union and later I had to sadly decline *The Abyss* due to commitments with him. I continued scratching away on the drawing board, illustrating for computer games, designing commercials, painting, writing and designing homes. Often I reflect on the amazing life and friends that the world of Art Direction has given me. Somehow I still manage to work those long hours, having recently completed four Boeing commercials.

Who sees the dawn, the sunrises and sunsets, and the vast wonderful variation of the earth's landscapes as we are so fortunate to have seen? Who has the opportunities to read and research and create environments from all over the globe, and throughout time. Fifty years has been not nearly long enough. **ADG**

Below: A group of draughtsmen and assistants in 1976 on STAR WARS, left to right: Peter Childs, Alan Roderick-Jones, Harry Lange, Steve Cooper and Ted Ambrose. Bottom: A collection of Mr. Jones' memorabilia from working on that historic and seminal film which has fundamentally changed the aesthetics, narrative style and economics of Hollywood filmmaking.



production design



PRODUCTION DESIGN CREDIT WAIVERS

by Laura Kamogawa, Credits Administrator

The following requests to use the Production Design screen credit were granted at its September and October meetings by the ADG Council upon the recommendation of the Production Design Credit Waiver Committee.

THEATRICAL:

John Collins – A MERRY FRIGGIN' CHRISTMAS –
Sycamore Pictures
Howard Cummings – MAGIC MIKE XXL – Warner Bros.
Thomas William Hallbauer – BUS 657 – Lionsgate
Jade Healy – MISSISSIPPI GRIND – Sycamore Pictures
Jonah Markowitz – HOLLYWOOD ADVENTURES –
Enlight Pictures
Nanci Roberts – THE ROAD WITHIN – Paradigm
Jennifer Spence – INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 3 –
Focus Features
Luca Tranchino – UNFINISHED BUSINESS –
20th Century Fox
Freddy Waff – BONE TOMAHAWK –
Twilight Riders, LLC

TELEVISION:

Sue Chan – WEIRD LONERS – 20th Century Fox
Lauren Crasco – RED ROAD – Sundance Channel
Anthony T. Fanning – BETTER CALL SAUL –
Sony Pictures Television
Chase Harlan – RED ROAD – Sundance Channel
Michael Hynes – LAB RATS – Disney XD
Scott P. Murphy – BLOODLINE – Sony Pictures
Stephan Olson – THE MCCARTHYs – Sony Pictures
Paul Peters – POWERS – Sony Pictures
Denise Pizzini – MARRY ME – Sony Pictures
Patti Podesta – POWERS – Sony Pictures
Glenda Rovello – THE MCCARTHYs – Sony Pictures
Christopher Tandon – POWERS – Sony Pictures
Michael Whetstone – WEIRD LONERS –
20th Century Fox
Michael Wylie – AGENT CARTER – ABC Studios



**coming
soon**

DANNY COLLINS

Dan Bishop, Production Designer
Christopher Brown, Art Director
Erin Magill, Assistant Art Director

Evan Regester, Graphic Designer
Chris Buchinsky, Storyboard Artist
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membership



WELCOME TO THE GUILD

by Emmanuel Espinoza, Membership Department

During the months of November and December, the following 20 new members were approved by the Councils for membership in the Guild:

Art Directors:

Kai Boydell – Various signatory commercials
Ashley Fenton – IN A WORLD... – Roadside Attractions
Stephen Leonhardt – BEYOND DANCE – MTV

Assistant Art Directors:

Sandra Carmola – Production Apprentice Program
Jaclyn Hauser – SILICON VALLEY – HBO
Paula Loos – Production Apprentice Program
John Myatt – UTOPIA – Fox Network
Elizabeth Newton – AGENT CARTER – ABC Studios
Colin Sieburgh – WEIRD LONERS – 20th Century Fox
Marika Stephens – STALKER – Warner Bros.
Haisu Wang – IS THAT A GUN IN YOUR POCKET –
Pocketful Films LLC

Graphic Designers:

Andrea Ferguson – SIN CITY SAINTS –
Mandalay Sports Media
Jonathan Stein – MONEYBALL – Columbia Pictures

Student Graphic Artist:

Paulina Hernandez – CBS Television City

Electronic Graphic Operators:

Gina Faubion – Fox Sports
Jennifer Campbell – DANCING WITH THE STARS –
ABC Studios

Illustrators:

Peter Carpenter – Various signatory commercials
Maciej Kuciara – CAPTAIN AMERICA 3 – Walt Disney
Thomas O'Neill – CONSTANTINE – NBC Studios

Junior Set Designer:

Gianna Costa – RU PAUL'S DRAG RACE – LogoTV

At the end of December, the Guild had 2291 members.

coming soon

FURIOUS 7

Bill Brzeski, Production Designer

Desma Murphy, Supervising Art Director

Jonathan Carlos, Alan Hook, Jay Pelissier,

Brian Stultz, Art Directors

Elena Albanese, Alex McCarroll,

Uzair Merchant, Assistant Art Directors

Christopher Isenegger, Lead Graphic Designer

Blair Strong, Graphic Designer

Po Sing Chu, Jonas De Ro, Andrew H. Leung,

Manuel Plank-Jorge, Dean Sherriff,

Concept Artists

Fabian Lacey, Conceptual Illustrator

Timothy M. Earls, Lead Set Designer

Sarah Forrest, Mayumi Konishi-Valentine,

Anne Porter, Set Designers

Grahame Ménage, Scenic Artist

Robert Consing, James Doh, John Fox,

Anthony Liberatore, Storyboard Artists

Danielle Berman, Set Decorator

Opens April 3





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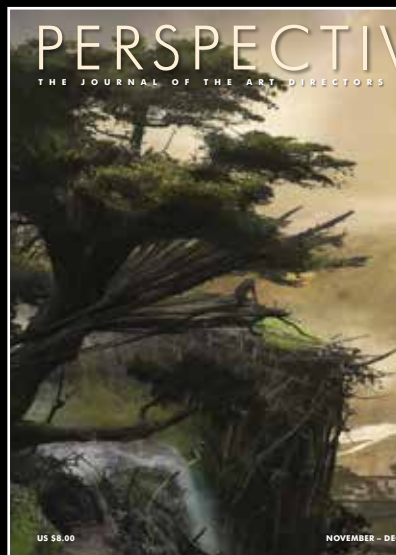
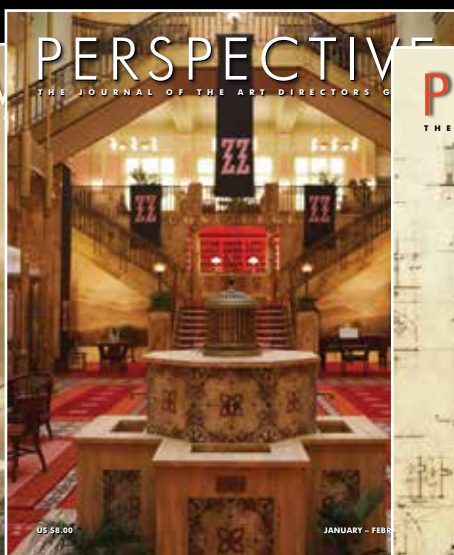
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reshoots



Photograph courtesy of the Margaret Herrick Library, A.M.P.A.S.®
from its 2005 exhibit Hans Dreier and the Paramount Glow

Gangster films are a substantial presence in the history of Hollywood, as least as we look back over that history today, but mobsters and their colorful lives were not on the radar of most audiences until prohibition made their activities front-page news. One of the first—and still one of the best—is shown here in a frame capture alongside a pen, charcoal and ink wash production illustration: director Josef von Sternberg's silent gangster film, *UNDERWORLD* (1927), designed by Paramount's Hans Dreier.

Speaking of Dreier's approach to designing films in general, curator William Ezelle Jones says, "I am fascinated with what Mr. Dreier brought to the lighting scheme. Each one of the drawings has a very precise lighting design, and the stills show how his [suggestions] were followed." In several instances, Mr. Jones exhibited the back of one of the illustrations, with Mr. Dreier's notations specifying camera positions and lighting direction.

Film critic Geoffrey O'Brien writes: "With barely a pause, we find ourselves off the streets and deep in the nocturnal world of the Dreamland Cafe...the place where time is suspended so that the most elemental human confrontations and transactions can play themselves out as dreamlike ritual: the unconscious as nightclub or brothel or casino."

Screenwriter Ben Hecht tells us in his autobiography: "I made up a movie about a Chicago gunman and his moll, called *FEATHERS MCCOY*. It was the first gangster movie to bedazzle the movie fans and there were no lies in it—except for a half-dozen sentimental touches introduced by its director, Josef von Sternberg." Hecht was not happy and asked that his name be removed from the credits, but when the Motion Picture Academy announced their first awards for 1927-28, the film won the Oscar for Best Original Screen Story. It became a huge box-office success and sparked a boom in gangster movies.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. Joe Morgenstern

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