

THE LOST BUS is based on a portion of the book PARADISE: ONE TOWN'S STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE AN AMERICAN WILDFIRE by Lizzie Johnson. It follows the story of a very human Kevin McKay, a bus driver who successfully managed to get 22 school children and their teacher, safely out of the chaotic and smoke-choked town as the fire consumed everything in its path.

The director, Paul Greengrass, has a background in documentary filmmaking, so his style - loose, frenetic, and fast moving - was always foremost in our minds. My work with him on NEWS OF THE WORLD was similar, but unlike that film, this story had many actual locations to replicate. We filled our sets with as many specifics as we could to suggest the truth of that community, but with projects such as this, the art department's job, while not at all unimportant, is to create a world that looks undesigned. That is often the hardest task.

It is a bit like landing a large army on a beach-many moving parts, all important in telling the story, but all somewhat equal. Paul envisioned the fire as a monster flying across the landscape, with the camera acting as its eyes. Our job was to provide an unassuming, but real envelope for all this action. In short, a background from which the story could unfold.