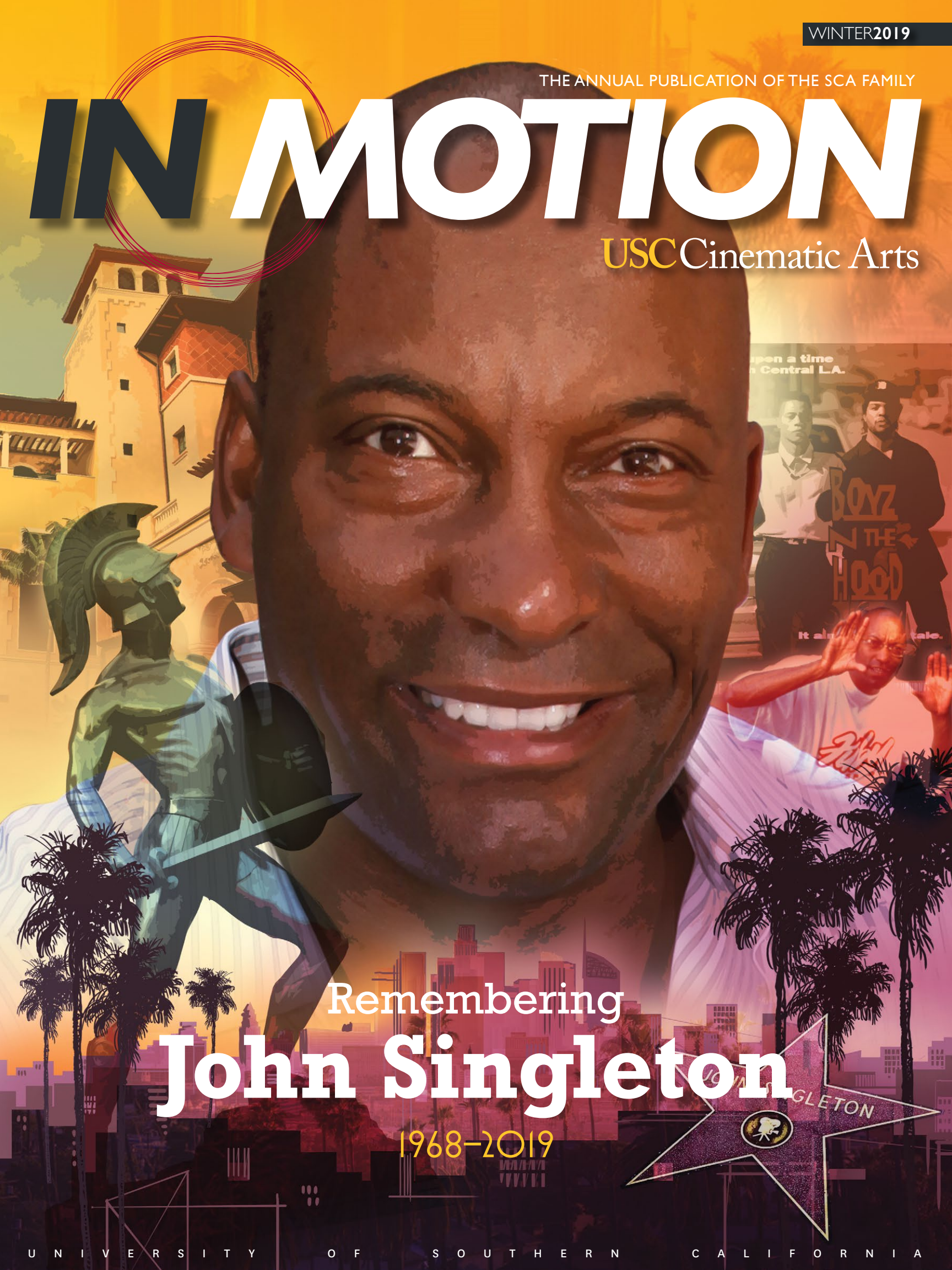


WINTER 2019

THE ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE SCA FAMILY

# IN MOTION

USC Cinematic Arts



Remembering  
**John Singleton**

1968–2019

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**90** Years of IMAGINATION  
INNOVATION  
INSPIRATION

## In This Issue

Message From The Dean **3** In Memoriam **37**

Year In Review **4** Remembering Mardik Martin **38**

Alumni Spotlight: Davah Avena **15** Remembering Norm Hollyn **39**

Alumni Spotlight: Nonny De La Peña **16** Alumni Quicktakes **40**

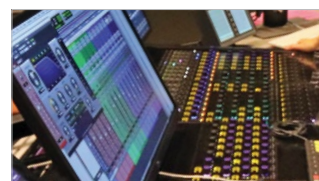
Alumni Spotlight: Eric Hoyt **17** Alumni TV & Films  
In Release **42**



JOHN SINGLETON **26**



STARK 40TH ANNIVERSARY  
**10**



THE ART OF  
CINEMATIC SOUND  
**18**



JOHN H. MITCHELL GIFT  
**22**



AMERICAN FILM  
SHOWCASE  
**32**



ESPORTS  
**34**



(FROM LEFT) Kevin Feige,  
Jennifer Todd, Dean Daley,  
the late John Singleton, and  
Stacey Sher at the Academy  
of Motion Picture Arts and  
Sciences.

## MESSAGE from the DEAN

1929 to 2019. What an amazing 90 years it has been for SCA. 2019 has been a year of homecomings, and of great joys and great sadness. At a School like Cinematic Arts we face the issues of any large community with new challenges every day, and we are deeply grateful to each and every one of you for your continued support and commitment to the School.

We decided to celebrate this 90th anniversary by welcoming alumni back to campus to reunite with each other, and to share their stories of career successes and challenges and even failures with our current students and fellow alums. Our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Alumni Conversation Series has been so successful that we want it to continue for the foreseeable future. You'll find photos of the many alumni who participated in this year's celebrations in the Year In Review section of this edition of *In Motion*.

Our cover story commemorates one of the saddest events of the year, the death of writer and director John Singleton on April 29. Just three weeks before he passed away, John participated in our signature anniversary event, *An Evening With Distinguished USC Alumni*, at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. There he joined producers Kevin Feige, Stacey Sher, and Jennifer Todd in a passionate conversation about their best-known work and the films that inspired their creativity. John was one of the School's biggest cheerleaders and we will deeply miss him.

We also tragically lost three talented students this year. Their deaths have profoundly affected their fellow students and other members of our campus community, and we are doing our best to support each other during this difficult time. We will remember them and the other members of our family who passed away this year.

In the pages ahead we also mark the establishment of the John H. Mitchell Endowed Fund for the Business of Entertainment—a major gift in support of our business of entertainment programs; and highlight our sound design program, which has been receiving well-deserved attention thanks to *Making Waves: The Art of Cinematic Sound*, a documentary featuring the field's best practitioners, many of whom are alumni. In October we held a wonderful party for the 40th anniversary of the Peter Stark Producing Program and celebrated Larry Turman's 27 years of remarkable leadership. Since its creation in 1979, the program has been a boot camp of sorts, successfully preparing its students for any jobs that exist in film, television, or new media regardless of genre or platform.

It is not too late to join us in celebrating the great history of the School. For upcoming events and other information go to [cinema.usc.edu](http://cinema.usc.edu). You may also email us at [communications@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:communications@cinema.usc.edu), or connect on social media @USCCinema. Please also update your contact information in SCA Community so we can stay in touch.

I hope to see you on campus and wish each and every one of you a very happy 2020.

**Elizabeth M. Daley**  
*Steven J. Ross/Time Warner Professor and Dean*



# YEAR *in* REVIEW



1



2

**USC School of Cinematic Arts**  
July 9 · 🌐

Congratulations to SCA's Valerie LaPointe for being recognized in Variety's "10 animators to watch" for her work in "Toy Story 4"  
[https://variety.com/ga.../variety-10-animators-to-watch-2019/...](https://variety.com/ga.../variety-10-animators-to-watch-2019/)

VARIETY.COM  
**10 Animators to Watch 2019**  
Variety highlights 10 animators making their mark on a growing industry.

3



4



5



6



7



## MEMI

1 Professor David Isaacs (far right, sitting) teaching screenwriting to the students of the Middle East Media Institute.

## SHANGHAI

2 Dean Elizabeth M. Daley (second from right, front row), Alan Baker, Associate Dean, Administration & International Projects (far right, first row) in Shanghai.

## FEIGE

3 Professor of Practice Jason Squire (fourth from left, kneeling) hosted Marvel President/Alum Kevin Feige (Seventh from Left) in his case study class for *Avengers: Endgame*.

## ACADEMY AWARDS

4 Alum Ludwig Göransson receiving his Oscar for the score of *Black Panther*.

5 Producer Melissa Berton (left) and Director/Alumna Rayka Zehtabchi pose with their Oscars for Best Documentary Short Subject

6 (From left) Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, Jimmy Chin, alum Evan Hayes, and Shannon Dill pose with the award for Best Documentary Feature for *Free Solo*

7 John Ottman posing with his Oscar for Film Editing

## VISIBLE EVIDENCE

8 Vice Dean Michael Renov with documentarian Michael Apted at the Visible Evidence Conference.

8



## GAME EXPO

9 Jam City CEO Chris DeWolfe delivers the keynote at the 2019 USC Games Expo.

10 The team from Ascend at the 2019 USC Games Expo.

11 A still from Advanced Games Project End of the Line from the 2019 Games Expo.

## COMMENCEMENT

12 Mary Pickford Endowed Professor Doe Mayer with Nahnachka Khan, SCA alum and 2019 Mary Pickford Alumni Award recipient, at the 2019 Commencement ceremony.

13 2019 Commencement Speaker Donna Langley.

## TODD

14 Professor Leonard Maltin with Jennifer Todd after a screening of *Jexi* in Maltin's Film Symposium class.

## DOLOMITE

15 Scott Alexander, Professor Leonard Maltin, and Larry Karaszewski after a screening of *Dolemite is my Name* in Maltin's Film Symposium class.

9



11

10



14



12



13



**usccinema**

## The Top 25 American Film Schools, Ranked

6:45 AM 8/15/2019  
by Trilby Beresford, Tara Bitran, Kirsten Chuba, Mia Galuppo, Katie Kilkenney, Pamela McClintock, Tatiana Siegel, and Rebecca Sun

The Hollywood Reporter hands out the annual grades to the colleges and universities — from #1 USC, to NYU — that are molding the entertainment industry's next generation of geniuses.

1,339 likes

usccinema Aw, shucks. Congrats to all our faculty, staff, administrators, alumni and students on their hard work — SCA retains the #1 spot on the Hollywood Reporter's annual American Film Schools Ranking... we couldn't be prouder! 🙌👏

15





# YEAR *in* REVIEW

## 90 YEARS OF CINEMATIC ARTS

In celebration of the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the School of Cinematic Arts, SCA alumni held conversations on stage with fellow alumni whose work they admire or whose careers have inspired them. Anniversary events included Q&As with the audience, and on occasion, screenings of favorite feature films, TV shows, or student shorts.

**16** Alumni Jon M. Chu and Rawson Thurber with students in SCA 108, the Ray Stark Family Theatre.

**17** Alumni James Vanderbilt, Josh Schwartz, and Mike Ireland in conversation in SCA 108.

**18 - 20** Alumni Melissa Rosenberg and John August held a conversation in 108 about writing.

**21** Alumnus Brian Grazer discussing his new book *Face to Face* in conversation with Dean Elizabeth M. Daley.

**22** Alum Natasha Foster-Owens.

**23** Alum Tina Mabry.

**24** The Class of 1996 panel featuring alumni Stephen Sommers, Jay Roach, Jennifer Todd, Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski

**25** Alum Timothy Dowling moderating a panel for the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conversation series.

**26** Alumnus and former president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts

and Sciences John Bailey introducing a 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Panel at the AMPAS Theatre.

**27** Alum Rick Fukuyama.

**28** Alum Jennifer Todd, alum John Singleton, alum Stacey Sher, and alum Kevin Feige at a 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary panel at the AMPAS Theatre.

**29** (Front row center) Jennifer Todd, the late John Singleton, Dean Elizabeth M. Daley, Stacey Sher, and Kevin Feige with an all SCA alumni audience at the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary panel at the AMPAS theatre.

**30** Karey Kirkpatrick and Kevin McCollum '89 performing a song at a 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary panel in SCA 108.

**31** Alumni Timothy Dowling, Joe Nussbaum, Richard Kelly, Susan Downey, Rick Famuyiwa, Sasha Alexander, Rian Johnson, and Danny Strong at a "Late '90s" Panel at the USC School of Cinematic Arts.

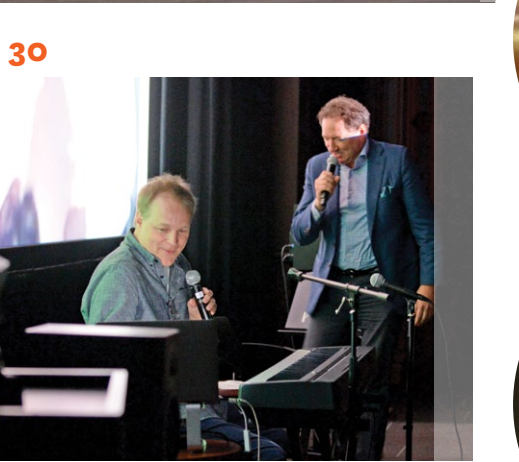
**32** Alum Kyle Mooney.

**33** Alum Peter Segal in SCA 108.

**34** (Center) Kyle Mooney and Peter Segal with alumni in SCA 108.

**35** Dean Elizabeth M. Daley and Brian Grazer with a crowd of alumni following a USC School of Cinematic Arts event.

**36** Alumni Shonda Rhimes and John Wells in front of a crowd of students in Norris Cinema Theatre.





# YEAR *in* REVIEW

**USC School of Cinematic Arts**  
July 19 •

USC Interactive Media & Games alum Jenova Chen aims to introduce a new genre of "altruistic gaming." We might be bias, but we think he might be on to something... Look for SKY in the app store and bring a little positivity to your phone this week!



LATIMES.COM

With 'Sky,' thatgamecompany's Jenova Chen wants to fix what's broken with games

## OAKIE

**37** (From Left) Trustee of the Jack Oakie and Victoria Horne Oakie Foundation David Sonne, alum Judd Apatow, trustee of the Oakie Foundation Charles Collier, Professor David Isaacs, Professor Barnett Kellman, and comedian Wayne Federman honoring Apatow as the Oakie Masters in comedy for 2019.

**38** Kellman and Apatow in discussion.

## STARK 40

**39** Stark Alumni Walt Becker, Stark Alum John August, Chair of the Peter Stark Producing Program Lawrence Turman, and Stark Alum Sam Dickerman at the 40th Anniversary of the Peter Stark Producing Program.

**40** Chair of the Peter Stark Producing Program Lawrence Turman addressing the crowd at the 40th Anniversary of the Peter Stark Producing Program.

## MAKING WAVES

**41** (From Left) David J. Turner, Editor (MFA Prod), Sandra Chandler, DP (MFA Prod) Midge Costin, Producer/Director (MA Prod), Bobette Buster, Producer (MFA Stark), Amy Reynolds Reed, Assoc Producer, Asst Editor (MFA Prod), Karen Johnson, Producer (MFA Stark), Allyson Newman, Composer (Thornton Film Scoring)

**42** Sound designer Walter Murch

## SHELLEY

**43-44** John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts' student work on display as part of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein Re-animated

**39**



**40**



**42**



**41**



**38**

**43**



**44**

## KISS KISS BANG BANG

**45** Alum Timothy Dowling moderating a panel for the anniversary of *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*.

**46** Robert Downey Jr. and alum Susan Downey at a panel discussion for the anniversary of *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*.

**47** Alum Timothy Dowling, Joel Silver, Robert Downey Jr. Dean Elizabeth M. Daley, Susan Downey, and Shane Black.

## PERIOD END SENTENCE

**48** USC Staff Desa Philadelphia, Director Rayka Zehtabchi, Editor/Cinematographer Sam Davis, Executive Producer Helen Yenser and Mark Harris at a screening of *Period. End of Sentence*.

## MITCHELL

**49** John H. Mitchell Endowed Chair in Cinematic Business (third from right) in front of a plaque honoring the dedication of the John H. Mitchell Programs.

**50** Mitchell Trustee Bill Allen, with Joan Fletcher at the dedication of the John H. Mitchell Endowed Chair.

**51** Bill Allen, Frank Price, Nahatka Khan and Eric Schrier at the Dedication of the John H. Mitchell Endowed Chair.

**52** USC President Carol Folt at the Dedication of the John H. Mitchell Endowed Chair.

**46**



**45**



**47**

**48**



**49**



**50**



**52**



**51**





# stark 40<sup>th</sup>

By Michael Lane



In the fall of 1979, the Peter Stark Motion Picture Producing Program opened its doors to its first class of students. A lot has changed since then—in the industry, at SCA, and within Stark. But as the old adage goes, the more things change the more they stay the same. Four decades later the fundamentals of a Stark education are still intact and are a large part of why it remains the premier program in creative producing for media, new and traditional forms. It's also the reason why its alumni speak so passionately about their time in the program and the people with whom they spent that time. **On October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019, SCA welcomed those alumni back to campus to reminisce and celebrate this milestone together.**

It all started with a generous gift from famed producer Ray Stark and his wife, Frances—enough to endow the program and get it on its feet. They asked that the program be named in honor of their recently deceased son, Peter. Its first Chair was film critic and Professor Art Murphy. The program was organized as a way of combining the educations of art and commerce. Students would take

some classes within the film school, which was then a department within the School of Performing Arts, and other classes at USC's business school. From the time the program started, students were required to have internships or jobs in the industry, so most classes were held at night. Academy Award-winning producer Ed Saxon (*Silence of the Lambs*, *Philadelphia*), class of 1984, remembers the business school classes were not as film-specific as he had hoped. "I was still in the part of the program where half would be business courses. There were some real business-y courses. There were a couple of classes where I had trouble connecting the dots."

Eventually, the program would bring all of its classes in house and the Chair would be responsible for securing faculty from both the creative disciplines of the industry and its business corners. Under consummate producer Larry Turman (*The Graduate*, *American History X*), Stark began to focus on creativity and the business courses were seen as tools to achieving those creative goals. "I don't know if I can teach creativity, but I try to have the students get in touch with themselves, get in touch with their creativity, and unleash it so that each one will receive the most personal satisfaction and hopefully create work meaningful not only to themselves but to the larger community," says Turman.

Stark continues to be about the delicate dance between art and commerce that dictates decision-making in Hollywood. As such, students don't just learn how to be creative or how to make good business decisions, but how to, as Turman puts it, "think like a producer." The program actually changes the way students think about a creative project, any creative project. They learn to assess its creative merits while simultaneously vetting its business viability and thus strategizing how it should be made, when, where, and for whom. Screenwriter/playwright/tech entrepreneur John August (*Big Fish*, *Go, Highland*) class of '94, notes, "It wasn't strictly a creative degree, it wasn't just about 'let's make art,' it was also, 'let's

run a business.' So, if you are developing apps, then you are figuring out: Who is the market? Who are the competitors? Who are the gatekeepers that we need to impress in order to get people to take us seriously? Those are the same things you ask for movies. Same thing happens in theater. Stuff I learned in Stark translated beyond just film and television." Oscar-nominated producer Stacey Sher (*Pulp Fiction*, *Erin Brockovich*) class of '85, echoes the sentiment: "Grads always bring the eye of looking at the zeitgeist and marketplace, the times we live in, along with the history/critical background and the sensibility that you get from Stark."

The program has seen a number of changes over the years, including dropping "Motion Picture" from its name. It is now known as The Peter Stark Producing Program as acknowledgement of the fact that television and new media like games and interactive experiences have been incorporated into the program in significant ways. Famously, the first Stark students had to wear suits and dresses to class. Some might still turn up in a suit, especially if they are coming from a job or internship, but jeans and sweats are prevalent, especially during the weeks when final projects are due.

While Stark always selects the best candidates from its applicant pool, perhaps the biggest change has been the demographics of the students. In the early days, cohorts were often predominantly straight, white, and male. As its

reputation has continued to grow the pool has broadened, and the program now attracts a more diverse student body, including many candidates from outside the United States. The class of 2000, for example, graduated just four women out of 24 students. In recent years, classes have been 50%-70% women, and often majority minority. The most recently admitted class has as many black women as it has white men, and women of color outrank men almost 2:1. The results are immediately apparent in the creative work students are producing, which represents a much broader swath of human experience than in those early days. At a time when Hollywood is still wrestling with representation, it will be exciting to see the impact these Stark grads will undoubtedly have.

Because of their industry savvy, Stark grads are formidable forces from the moment they graduate. Saxon recalls lessons from



LEFT TO RIGHT: Kathy Fogg, former Associate Director of the Peter Stark Producing Program; legendary producer Ray Stark, who, with his wife Frances, endowed the program and named it in memory of their late son; and Art Murphy, the former film critic who created the program and served as its first Chair. BELOW: Legendary producer Larry Turman has been Chair of the Stark Producing Program since 1991.







the first Chair of the program, the late Art Murphy, who would tell him and his classmates: "You will know more about the movie business than ninety-five percent of the people who work in it." That was his promise. That continued to be true beyond Murphy's tenure, says David Kramer, President of United Talent Agency (UTA), class of '92. "When I came to UTA I knew lots of information that other people didn't. They were super smart, but they didn't have those couple of years that I had. They didn't have the terms of art if you will. They hadn't read contracts, they didn't know about WGA, DGA, SAG, so they had a lot of work to do. They had to learn it on the job as things came up. I didn't."

Producer Hieu Ho, class of 2007, who recently launched new company Imminent Collision with actor Randall Park and writer Michael Golumco, had worked in the industry prior to attending Stark. He remembers that part of his motivation for enrolling was the ability to get that in-depth knowledge: "One of the advantages of the program is it provides such a holistic and practical understanding of the business across all different sectors, from financial modeling to business affairs to actually screenwriting. That was not something that I had from being an assistant."

While the program relies heavily on the lessons of Hollywood

history, it is always looking forward. The industry has seen significantly more upheaval in the past forty years than it did in its previous hundred and Stark students have had a front row seat for it all.

Stark's curriculum evolves alongside the industry, often anticipating where the industry is headed. Five years before Apple launched the iTunes store for music and eight years before YouTube went live, Stark students in the late '90s were learning about "digital lockers" where film and tv content would be stored electronically and sold directly to consumers on a per-title, subscription, or ad-supported basis. The key is

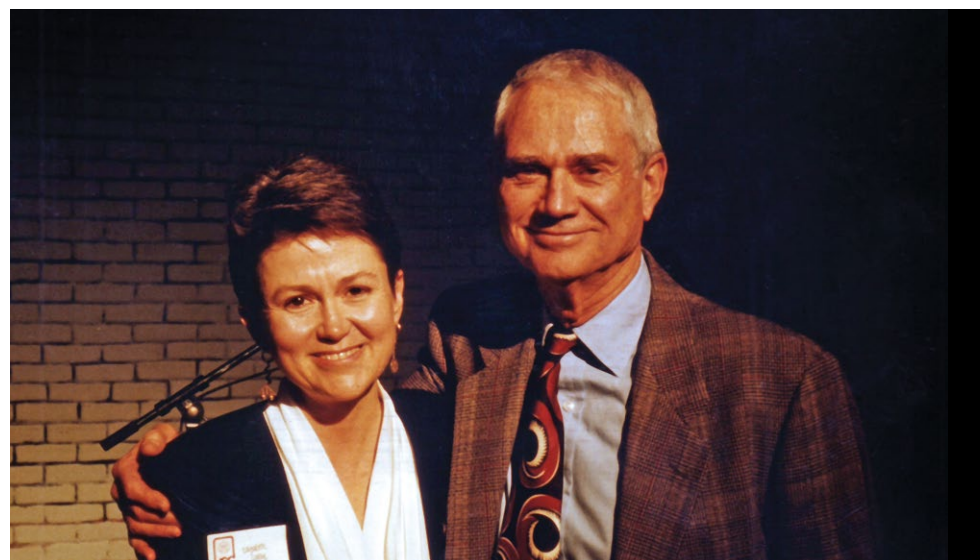
the faculty, "all working professionals, all top of their game," as Turman likes to point out. High-level executives are brought in, sometimes even making their own offices the classroom in order to give students insight into the most current industry practices." This offers an edge in a business that, in the current climate, is always trying to be the first to the next development, be it creative, technological, or fiscal. "Having that real world experience, with all the teachers who are also working, it was just invaluable because you're having real-time conversations about things that are happening now, not just theoretical," says Monique Keller, class of 2015, currently an executive at Amazon Studios.



But the foundation at Stark remains a creative education; its graduates earn an MFA. The core experience for the students is learning how to be impactful storytellers. "The Stark Program seemed to mesh up with what I wanted to do both creatively, in terms of being a creative producer, director, writer, and my entrepreneurial instincts," says writer/director Walt Becker (*Clifford the Big Red Dog*, *Wild Hogs*), class of '94. "Some of the best story classes at the time were taught by the Stark Program, in terms of just learning to tell stories, learning what a screenplay is." Ho, who helped launch the film division at BuzzFeed at a time when big data was starting to affect content decisions, says storytelling is important, regardless of what's happening with technology. "The entertainment industry is shifting—and it's a fairly big shift these days—but there's always going to be a need to support great storytelling across any platform. Not just film and television."

The anniversary event, held in the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Courtyard at SCA, was a reunion of Starkies from every decade who are now working across the globe in multiple countries, genres and platforms. It was also an occasion to celebrate the long and ongoing tenure of Larry Turman, who became Chair in 1991. Led by class of '94 alumni John August, Walt Becker, and Sam Dickerman, the alumni have generously pooled resources to form a fund in Larry's name. From Turman's early days through the program's most recent grads, alumni have strong and fond feelings for their mentor. Kramer, midway through the program when Turman became Chair, remembers: "I don't think he even started until a few weeks before the program started that year. He had to get his sea legs. He had to figure it all out. What I loved about Larry, his energy was so positive, so optimistic, he was completely committed to the program and you could really feel that." Flashforward twenty-two years and producer Steven Love (*The Land*, *Wednesdays*), class of 2014, remembers Larry in similar terms: "Larry was always trying to make it better. I mean, even now. Last time I talked to him, he was trying to figure out how to do it better. Even though he's been doing it for so long."

In today's world, it's a remarkable thing for a person to dedicate a quarter century to a single project, a project that has never been broken but, in his eyes, can always be improved. Turman's devotion is felt by the students from their first contact with him, and appreciated by alumni who are deep into their careers. Perhaps Turman himself says it best. His regular refrain to his dedicated faculty and staff is: "We're here for the students, nothing else."



ABOVE: SCA Dean Elizabeth Daley with Stark Chair Larry Turman. The two producers took up their respective roles within months of each other in 1991.

BELOW: Ray Stark with early "Starkies" as the program's students are known. During the first few years of the program students were required to wear business attire at classes.



# ALUMNI *Spotlight*

By Keryl Brown Ahmed



## DRAMEDY SCRIBE

The School of Cinematic Arts seems to have a way of turning Production students into writers. Maybe because of the SCA focus on storytelling, which is evident even in CTPR 507, the course students take in their first year of the Production MFA that is supposed to teach them the technical aspects of filmmaking.

For 2003 Production MFA graduate Davah Avena, a television dramedy writer most recently credited on Eva Longoria's *Grand Hotel*, it was in 507 that she discovered her love for writing. Although she landed in television, Avena (whose first name rhymes with lava) focused on feature writing at SCA. "There wasn't a lot of talk about TV at all while I was at school," she says. However her exit interview planted a seed. "I had a really great conversation with my mentor, Brenda Goodman. She sat me down and was like, 'Don't take this the wrong way, but you have a TV sensibility.' And it was this *Beautiful Mind* moment—suddenly everything made sense."

Avena researched ways into the TV writing field. "I read on Google that you should write what you watch," she recalls. So, she cut her teeth on comedy specs for *My Wife and Kids* and *George Lopez*. She applied to the National Hispanic Media Coalition's Writers Program—submitting the *George Lopez* spec—and got in. After NHMC, she completed a Nickelodeon Writing Program Fellowship. "I was the program girl," she says.

Despite starting out in half-hour comedy, Avena decided to also embrace her more dramatic side. Her first television job, which she got through connections at NHMC, was as writers' assistant, and eventually a staff writer, on ABC Family's *KyleXY*. NBC's *Medium* followed. Avena has since carved out a space for herself in the dramedy world, working on shows like *East Los High* on Hulu,

Lifetime's *Devious Maids* and ABC's *Kevin (Probably) Saves the World*. She was a supervising producer on *Grand Hotel* on ABC.

The connection to Longoria (who also produced *Devious Maids*) is coincidental, but Avena says her success can be traced back to those early days on *KyleXY* and *Medium*. "The writers' room for *KyleXY* had a lot of future showrunners in it," she explains. When she got the call for a job on season three of *Devious Maids*, she still had a few weeks left in the writers' room for *East Los High*. "The showrunner, Carlos Portugal, was like, 'You have to go for it.'" Avena says the support she has gotten from superiors has made her want to help younger writers, and she makes it a point to reach out to new writers transitioning into rooms.

Avena always knew she wanted to work in a creative field. As an undergrad at Evergreen State College in Washington, her home state, she took every visual art class she could. Evergreen only offered documentary classes—no traditional, narrative cinema classes. "Because I leaned so much toward narrative storytelling, my documentaries would always have a more experimental part to them." After working in graphic design for a few years, she applied to graduate programs. She was rejected from San Francisco State University. Their feedback? She was "too Hollywood" for their program. "I considered that a compliment," Avena says. It should come as no surprise then that USC turned out to be the perfect fit.

Avena has one major regret about her time at USC. "I was constantly making films, and maybe I should have socialized a bit more," she says, laughing, adding that she still managed to make "a few really good friends." But her time at SCA contributed to her versatility and work ethic, she says.

Avena is now co-executive producer on the upcoming NBC musical dramedy *Zoe's Extraordinary Playlist*, which debuts in early 2020.



## Davah Avena

HAS CARVED OUT A  
WRITING CAREER IN COMEDY,  
AND DRAMA





## THE GODMOTHER OF VIRTUAL REALITY

**Nonny de la Peña had a thriving career as a journalist and documentary filmmaker, but something was missing. The disconnect between the stark realities described in written articles and the produced, fixed perspective of the cinematic medium bothered her. She wanted to capture the real-world content of the articles she wrote in a way that allowed readers to truly experience the subject matter.**

Sometime in the 1990s, de la Peña came across a book called *Virtual Reality* by Howard Rheingold. At the time, commercial virtual reality (VR) was still primarily theoretical—practical uses were restricted to NASA and other highly-funded research facilities investigating uses for medical, aeronautical, and military training. Nevertheless, reading about this innovative medium helped de la Peña imagine a world in which she could “put people on the scene and tell real stories.”

While mulling over the concept of VR for journalism, she quickly ran into substantial roadblocks. “There was no real ability to make it, it was expensive, the equipment wasn’t there,” says de la Peña of her early attempts at VR exploration. So she decided to focus on documentary filmmaking until technology caught up to her ideas. In 2003, she produced and directed a documentary on Guantanamo Bay, including a large segment examining civil liberties at the notorious American detention center located in Cuba. “After that we got funding from the Bay Area Video Coalition to build a live version of that section of the documentary, and it kind of took off from there,” she says of herself and her co-author, digital artist Peggy Weil, who is also a lecturer in SCA’s Production Division. With funding from BAVC and the MacArthur Foundation, de la Peña and Weil created a fully immersive virtual reality piece called *Gone Gitmo* that placed the viewer within the walls of the detention center, simulating the experiences of detainees. “After I made that piece, I realized, ‘Wow, this can be used for all kinds of journalism,’”

de la Peña reflected. The 2007 project cemented de la Peña’s place in the VR industry; she is now widely considered the pioneer of “Immersive Journalism,” a term she coined, and has earned the moniker “the Godmother of VR.”

An all-around pioneer in the field, de la Peña did whatever was necessary to create projects. “There were no headsets that worked for what I wanted, there was no production pipeline, so essentially if I wanted to make what I wanted to make, I had to create the headsets and pipeline myself,” she explains.

De la Peña founded and heads a company called Emblematic Group, which creates “impactful content surrounding technology,” specifically virtual reality and augmented reality. “We call it ‘mixed reality’ now,” she says of the evolution of immersive media. Emblematic has launched a new toolset and distribution platform called Reach.Love, which allows users to create their own volumetric experiences with a user-friendly interface and easily modifiable elements. The company is also exploring the world of narrative VR. “It’s cool to be able to carve out the future of fictional storytelling in an immersive space,” de la Peña says. One project, commissioned by the Japanese American National Museum, tells the story of Stanley Hayami, a young man imprisoned in an internment camp during the Second World War.

De la Peña was well into her research on VR before she made the decision to pursue a doctorate. There was finally a program that suited all her interests: SCA’s Media Arts + Practice PhD, which prioritizes experimentation. With a disbelieving laugh,

she confirms, “I’ve been running a company while doing my PhD, yes.” She officially completed her degree in May 2019.

As others try to figure out how to tell stories in VR de la Peña, who says she travels “way too much,” is in great demand. “I’m asked to speak a lot, but I love it,” she says. “It’s exciting to be the person to drive the language of new media.”



## Nonny De La Peña

IS CREATING NEW MEDIA’S STORYTELLING LANGUAGE

## THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ARCHIVIST

**The stories of classical Hollywood are hidden in the pages of old trade publications like *Photoplay*, *Variety*, *Screenland*, *Motion Picture News*, and others. These historic tabloids are often inaccessible to many cinema scholars, buried in the closets of private collectors or scattered in the archives of Los Angeles or New York.**

A graduate of both the Peter Stark Producing Program (’08) and the Division of Cinema & Media Studies (’12), USC School of Cinematic Arts alumnus Eric Hoyt knew the problem well and is actively bringing archival research into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hoyt is an Associate Professor of Media and Cultural Studies at the University of Wisconsin – Madison and the director of the Media History Digital Library (MHDL), “a non-profit initiative dedicated to digitizing historic books and magazines about film, broadcasting, and recorded sound for broad public access.” Among its key projects is Lantern, an open-access database containing over two million pages of industry publications spanning 1905 to 1964. With a simple keyword search, Lantern scans every word of every publication within the search parameters and returns the relevant pages with the keyword highlighted in context, significantly truncating the research process. What would once have been days of finding and flipping through old magazines is now at one’s fingertips in a matter of seconds, effectively giving scholars unprecedented access to an essential component of Classical Hollywood research.

The idea for Lantern originated with Hoyt’s time as a Stark student, working in the mailroom of United Talent Agency (UTA). “I delivered the trade papers to the agents’ desks and saw how people read them for information and news. But they also read them with a critical eye,” says Hoyt. “People would poke fun but also invest a tremendous amount of energy.” He quickly realized “the function that these trade papers play as gatekeeper and scorekeeper.”

The experience also revealed the important role of film archives and libraries within the studio system. “That was a research question that I would have never even thought to explore if it hadn’t been for my time

working in the industry,” Hoyt says. That question fueled the foundation of his PhD research (and, eventually, the subject of his first book, *Hollywood Vault: Film Libraries before Home Video*), but it also helped sow the seeds for Lantern. Understanding the significance of both the archives and the trade publications, Hoyt set to work, collaborating with MHDL Founder and Director Emeritus David Pierce, collecting old publications and writing the backend coding that would eventually become Lantern.



## Eric Hoyt

IS REVOLUTIONIZING ARCHIVAL RESEARCH WITH LANTERN DIGITAL SEARCH ENGINE

“It started out with me in my car driving to the San Fernando valley to borrow old volumes of *Film Daily* and *Photoplay* from a collector up there,” recalls Hoyt. The project “took a lot of work, and it almost didn’t happen many times simply because there were lots of other demands,” says Hoyt, who was also finishing his dissertation and raising newborn twins. But the long drives and late nights proved well worth it. Like any field, the quickest way to make inroads in academia is to address a need, to offer something people want. Lantern offered exactly that, and other scholars quickly took notice. “I could tell early on, just working on this project, it was getting me goodwill in the field,” says Hoyt. “As a young budding academic, you’re trying to make a name and get attention. This was a way that I’m creating resources that people would use.”

His work with Lantern helped Hoyt land a coveted position at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, where he is now a tenured professor in the Department of Communication Arts. As both a scholar and a teacher, Hoyt sums up his work as a “blend of digital media production and information science with the study of film and broadcast.” His forthcoming book, *Motion Papers: The Triumph of Hollywood’s Trade Press*, was “born out of the digital

work” he and his team have been doing at MHDL, which also includes Project Arclight, a data mining and visualization tool that serves as a companion to Lantern. It is certainly a unique intersection, combining the digital humanities with archival research and Classical Hollywood studies. But after more than a decade spent studying the conditions that move the tides of media industries, Hoyt understands better than most that sometimes looking backwards provides the best vision for what is yet to come.



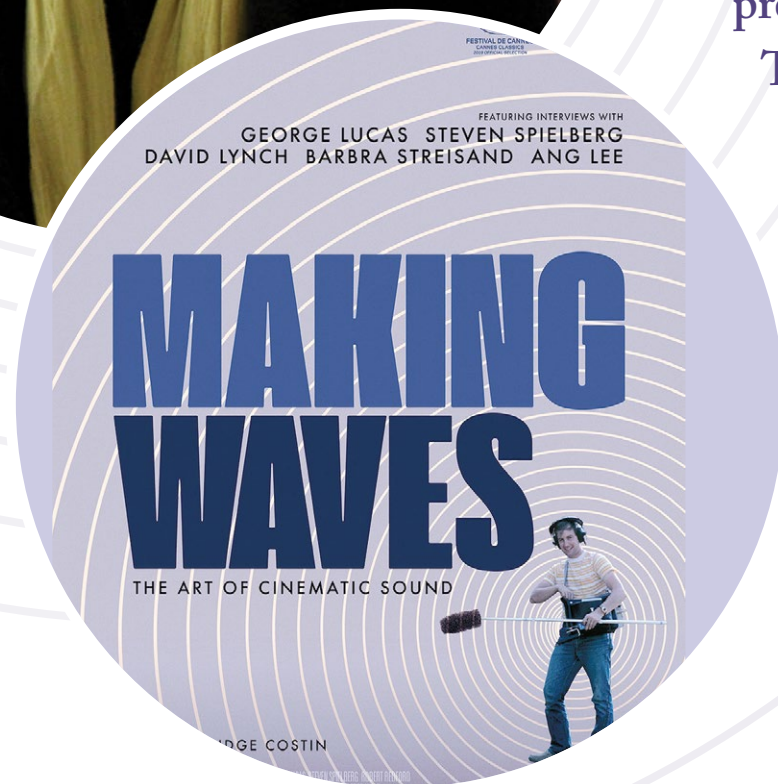
# The Art of Cinematic Sound

SCA'S SOUND DEPARTMENT PROWESS INSPIRES A NEW FILM

By Oliver Jones



The documentary *Making Waves: The Art of Cinematic Sound* had a pretty starry 2019. The film, directed by Midge Costin, the Kay Rose Professor in the Art of Dialogue & Sound Editing and Head of Sound in the Division of Film & Television Production at the School of Cinematic Arts, premiered in the spring at the Tribeca Film Festival. From there it made the rounds at over a dozen film festivals—including Cannes, Munich, London, and Seoul—before ultimately being released theatrically in October.



OPPOSITE PAGE: SCA professor and alumnus Midge Costin, director of *Making Waves: The Art of Cinematic Sound*. THIS PAGE: (clockwise from right) SCA's Chief Audio Engineer Buddy Halligan, with students; Foley Artist Alyson Dee Moore (The Dark Knight); Sound Designer Gary Rydstrom (Saving Private Ryan).

But things weren't always so rosy for the one of a kind documentary, which dynamically illustrates the essential and emotional role sound plays in how we process stories and the filmgoing experience overall. When Costin and her producers applied for a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to help complete the film, they were turned down.

"There were, like, five readers who reviewed our grant, and all of them said 'excellent' except for one guy," says Costin, showing no signs of jet lag over lunch at the University Club despite having just arrived home from the Berlin Film Festival. "He said no because he thought we were making a USC infomercial."

The guy might have had a point. Costin's movie is indeed filled with SCA graduates, chief among them the legendary Walter Murch, the first person to ever receive a Sound Designer credit for his Oscar-winning—and groundbreaking—work on Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. But the truth is, it is impossible to tell the story of cinema sound and its innovators without including USC.

For example, when SCA grad George Lucas wanted Murch to do the sound for *Star Wars* and couldn't get him, he called USC's legendary sound guru Ken Miura, who suggested recent graduate Ben Burtt. Burtt would go on to create the iconic sound effects for the franchise on the way to a career that includes two Special Achievement Academy Awards. Then when the folks at Pixar wanted Burtt to create the soundscape for *Toy Story*, he was busy and so Miura suggested Gary Rydstrom, whose sound work has gone on to garner 17 Oscar nominations and seven wins.



"It's not a coincidence," explains Costin of the USC connection. "At USC, Ken Miura allowed these guys to be creative while also letting them work through the night on all our equipment we have here."

Adds Costin, "We're all standing on the shoulders of giants, and here all those giants come back and do lectures."



The tradition of sound innovators coming out of USC continues today, with such industry leaders as nine-time Emmy nominee Sharyn Gersh (SCA '95) and three-time Oscar nominee Erik Aadahl (SCA '98). Even *Black Panther* and *Creed* director Ryan Coogler (SCA '11) was known to be a bit of a sound nerd during his time at USC. Indeed, Coogler was so well-regarded by the sound department that they let him come back and use the Foley stage when he was completing his first feature, 2013's *Fruitvale Station*.

But 'soundies'—sound department lingo for students who have managed to resist the almighty allure of the camera and recognize the magic and potential of sound—are not always so easy to spot. Ask the professors on the lower level of the Steven Spielberg Building and they will tell you that, by and large, soundies tend to be a bit less demonstrative than picture people. They're good listeners—obviously an essential quality for anyone who cares about sound—and prefer to let their work speak for itself.

As SCA Associate Professor Richard Burton puts it, "Sound tends to attract people who don't need validation."

Part of the reason that USC has had such an outsized impact on the world of cinematic sound is SCA's approach to teaching it, going back to the days of Miura and even before. (Miura died last year after 49 years at USC, while legendary music editing maestro Kenneth Hall, the "Pied Piper of SCA music," passed away in 2016) Rather than approach sound as a separate



technical skill, the School teaches students the fundamentals of storytelling and how sound can help tell that story.

"Even when we have students who choose to focus on it, we don't treat them as sound editors or sound designers," explains Suhail Kafity, a lecturer in SCA's Sound Department whose sound effects editor credits include *Remember the Titans* (2000) and *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011). "We always treat them as filmmakers who are using sound to tell a story. We encourage them to the fullest, but at the same time, we don't discourage them from taking other practicums beyond sound, like picture editing and directing."

When she was first out of SCA graduate school, Costin got a gig as a sound effects editor on Tony Scott's NASCAR flick *Days of Thunder* (1990), where she was tasked

with creating the sound for the "bad guy" engines. No one at USC taught her that animal sounds slowed way down made a speeding engine sound terrifying, or that a gunshot or explosion buried deep in the mix of a high-stress clutch shift would ratchet up the intensity. The truth is, the program had taught her something far more important.

"I knew storywise what the sound was supposed to do," says Costin. "I knew how to break down the individual story points and translate what was happening into sound. Every choice I made was based on the story."

During Costin's time as a student, sound often played second fiddle to picture in the minds of students, who far too often did not consider its significance until just before putting their films in the can. Studios that under-budgeted for sound in comparison to the visuals frequently shared this attitude. As *Making Waves* points out—Costin interviewed well over 90 filmmakers for her documentary—it wasn't until big money-making filmmakers like Barbra Streisand, Robert Altman, Stanley Kubrick, and Lucas started stressing to their studio bosses just how significant sound is to the overall filmmaking experience that things began to change.

These days, things are a bit different regarding sound. At least at USC. "For young filmmakers, the meaning of sound has shifted,"

*"Sound in film is what created sound as an art form. Otherwise, there had been no structure for it."*

—Midge Costin

explains Costin.

"From the time that kids are little now, they're taking videos on their phones. By the time they get here, they are well aware that the area that keeps their work amateurish is sound. So that has made them much more interested in it. They want to know, 'How do I do that?'"

Fortunately, at SCA, students have the most up-to-date equipment to realize their sound ideals. Each of SCA's two sound classrooms is equipped with industry-standard Avid S6 consoles. (Avid is a longtime SCA partner.) The consoles are essentially sophisticated remote controls that make using the Pro Tools sound mixing software faster and more intuitive. Not only are the Avid consoles the size of a small conference table; they are the tools students will encounter once they graduate and enter the workforce at professional post-production facilities.

"We have a duty and a responsibility as a university to teach film students what is being used in the real world, not just what is convenient, easy, or cheap," says Buddy Halligan, SCA's Chief Audio Engineer, former Senior Audio Engineer at Bell Sound Studios who recorded and worked with Ray Charles, Steven Stills, Johnny Cash, Jack Lemmon, and Elizabeth Taylor, to name a few. "None of this is inexpensive, not by a long shot," adds Halligan.

One of the most crucial elements of the sound department, the Foley room, is neither high-priced or cutting-edge. In fact, it looks like a garage sale. It is here, using things like shreds of plastic, old tools, and gym equipment, that students add dynamism and continuity to their storytelling. It is also where students begin to grasp the full creative potential of sound in film.

"At first students tend to be very hesitant about the Foley stage," says Kafity. "They don't completely understand what they can do with it. Then when we're in there, we don't just teach students how to record footsteps; we teach them how you can change the character of the film just in the way that they record footsteps. All of a sudden, their imagination takes off and their eyes open up. They realize they can use a pair of pliers to make a gun rattle in a way that changes how a movie plays, or how rolling a basketball on gravel can even make tires sound emotional."

Emotional tires? It may sound a little strange to a non-soundy but makes perfect sense to anyone who has worked in sound—or, for that matter, anyone who saw Costin's film. As she says herself, "Sound is where so much of the emotion lies in film."

This is another way of saying that sound is what allows a story to exist beyond the screen. It is what transports an audience

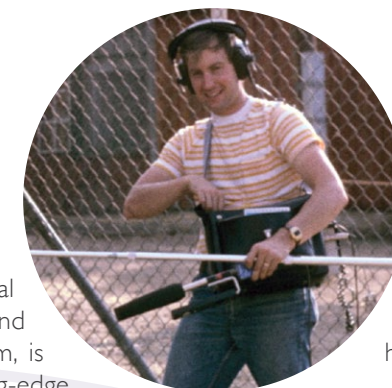
into the world portrayed on screen, whether it's a NASCAR track, a galaxy far, far away, or somewhere much closer to home.

"That's what hooked me on sound years ago and what hooks my students today: the enjoyment of seeing a film come alive," says Burton, who has been teaching at SCA for twenty years and has 103 sound department credits. "When you string a bunch of still photos together and play them rapidly so that it's a moving picture, it's still, at the heart of it, just static moments."

"It's not until it gets married to sound," says Burton, "that it truly enters the room and the whole thing comes alive."



Sound professionals at work. (From left) Ai-Ling Lee (*Jojo Rabbit*); Ann Behlmer (*Braveheart*); (Top) Ben Burtt (*Star Wars*); Pat Jackson (*The English Patient*); Walter Murch (*Apocalypse Now*).







# John H. Mitchell Gift Bolsters Business of Cinematic Arts Program

In his heyday as president of Columbia Pictures' television division from 1968 to 1977, the late John H. Mitchell produced TV classics *The Flintstones*, *Bewitched* and Emmy-winning TV movie *Brian's Song* along with more than 150 other shows. Intent on extending his legacy to future generations of hit-makers, the Patricia W. Mitchell Trusts—named after the executive's late wife—has endowed USC School of Cinematic Arts with \$20 million earmarked for entertainment business studies.

Story by Hugh Hart



Photo by Roberto A. Gómez





Supervised by USC alum Bill Allen '79, these monies establish The John H. Mitchell Endowment Fund for the Business of Entertainment; The John H. Mitchell Endowed Chair in the Business of Entertainment; and The Patricia W. & John H. Mitchell Endowed Fund for Student Support, whose scholarship recipients will be designated as Mitchell Scholars.

Dean Elizabeth M. Daley expects the gift to play a critical role in strengthening both Business Cinematic Arts programs, the Graduate Certificate in the Business of Entertainment, launched 24 years ago, and the Business of Cinematic Arts undergraduate degree program (BCA) launched 20 years ago, both in partnership with Marshall School of Business. "Entertainment is an art form but it's also a big business," says Daley. "We're one of the few schools that truly respect that fact, which is why we work so closely with our business school. This gift enables us to expand the program's impact because we'll have more support for faculty, visiting lecturers, talent week, internship programs. For everything, really."

Daley and Senior Associate Dean Marlene Loadvine put together proposals tailored to the Mitchell Trusts' interests after being contacted by Allen, who previously served as president of the USC Alumni Association and now runs Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation. Allen knew Patricia because she and John H. Mitchell, who died in 1988, had been close friends with his father Steve Allen, creator of *The Tonight Show*, his mother Jane Meadows, and his aunt Audrey Meadows, famous for playing Alice Kramden in *The Honeymooners*. "In the early 2000s when I got involved in administering the estates for my father and Aunt Audrey, Pat asked me to be the trustee for the Mitchell estate," Allen recalls. "I told Pat if she wanted the Trust to develop well-rounded, ethically based leaders and encourage diversity in the film and television industry, she should look at USC because it's the number one film school in the nation."

Patricia Mitchell died in 2016. This June, USC, UCLA and Mr. Mitchell's alma mater, the University of Michigan, were officially named as recipients of Mitchell Trust endowments. Allen explains, "Pat's lawyer constructed a document that enabled me to give the proceeds from the trust to one or more universities, and each school came forward with very creative proposals."

Like John H. Mitchell, who served as president of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences before his death in 1988, Allen champions the symbiotic connection between business acumen and creative ingenuity. He remembers pushing film school leadership to include business courses when he first arrived at USC in 1975. "As an 18-year-old freshman, I was thrilled to enroll at the legendary USC School of Cinema, but there were no entertainment business courses in accounting, marketing, finance, or distribution. I set up a meeting with the co-chairs, E. Russell McGregor and Mort Zarcoff, and asked them, 'Why aren't there any business courses in the film school? It is called show *business*.' They told me the business school had sole provenance over those classes."

Prohibited from pursuing a double-major, Allen took business courses every summer and ultimately augmented his BA degree in Cinema Television Production with a minor in business. Upon graduation, he went to work at CBS, rising through the ranks to direct comedy development at the network. Allen then joined forces with Mary Tyler Moore and Grant Tinker to become president of MTM during its reign as one of Hollywood's hottest TV production companies. "Because I had both the business and the creative training at USC, it



enabled me to serve as a sort of diplomat and translator between creative and business folks," Allen says. "USC plays a unique role in this type of training because the Business of Cinematic Arts programs bring these disciplines together."

Both the graduate and undergraduate programs will be run by Bonnie Chi, the John H. Mitchell Endowed Chair in the Business of Entertainment, who also oversees the School's Industry Relations Office. The newly fortified BCA undergraduate program, a magnet for aspiring agents, managers and studio executives, annually offers 55 Marshall School of Business freshmen a sequence of nine courses leading to a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in Cinematic Arts. At the graduate level, students at SCA, Marshall, Gould School of Law, and Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism can take courses within the Graduate Certificate Program en route to earning the John H. Mitchell Graduate Certificate in the Business of Entertainment.

## An Appetite for Ethics

The Mitchell monies enable Chi and her BCA team to address a topic that Allen describes as a key priority: business ethics. "That issue really resonated for Pat as well as for John, and certainly for myself," he says. "Grounding people in a framework of mores and values is a big component of the Mitchell gift. So often these days, we hear about people in the industry who have not acted ethically. When scandals break, people lose their jobs because of breaches in behavior. Through this gift, we want to train people to make better decisions and not harm otherwise creative, successful careers."

Business ethics will soon become an integral part of the BCA curriculum, according to Chi. "We will be creating a class or a seminar taught by executives who demonstrate a high level of business ethics," she says. "It's important to instill our students with core values by learning from executives who have achieved success the right way. The #metoo movement broke everything wide open about the importance of how people in this business conduct themselves. Training in work ethics is now going to be built into the curriculum."

Chi also plans to use Mitchell funding to expand SCA's long-standing engagement with industry professionals through guest lectures, internship programs, and special events. She points out that high-level executives within entertainment teach for both the graduate certificate program and the undergraduate BCA program, bringing a real time working knowledge into the classroom. Alan Berger, senior agent at Creative Artists Agency, conducts his night-time graduate course out of CAA's Century City headquarters, where Henry Winkler, former Disney-ABC TV Group President Ben Sherwood, and NBCUniversal Vice Chairman Ron Meyer have given talks. Anne Globe, Chief Marketing Officer for Skydance Media, teaches the Producing and Marketing Feature Length Films class for the undergraduate BCA program, where guest speakers have included Paramount Pictures Executive Vice President David Waldman and *Bad Moms* producer Suzanne Todd. Also within the BCA curriculum is Television: Integrating Creative and Business Objectives, taught by producer Scott A. Stone, which has hosted top level executives in television including Showtime Senior Vice President of Programming, Randy Runkle, SCA '89, and William Morris Endeavor partner and agent Nancy Josephson. Further exemplifying SCA's learn-by-doing approach, Stone last year arranged for students to view

actual TV pilots written, directed and produced by students at the film school. Splitting his class into groups and acting as content buyers for various networks/program services, BCA students were asked to watch the SCA pilots through the lens of their particular program service, then decide how the projects fit their exhibition and financial strategy.

BCA success stories include sports technology entrepreneur Kai Sato '07. "The beauty of this program is that you have these business kids, like I was, earning this unique degree by taking classes from industry executives," says Sato, who runs Kaizen Reserve, Inc. and chairs the BCA Network comprising past and present participants. "You learn so much in this program about crafting a narrative and thinking about who your audience is."

Sato cites lessons learned through his United Talent Agency internship and Wednesday night classes conducted by William Morris Agency's

then-president Dave Wirschafter as being especially useful in his entrepreneurial career. "In film or television, you're investing a lot of money, which is very similar to venture capital," he says. "That's why it's critical to drill down into what your ultimate story or tease is going to be so you can figure out how to execute it. Being involved now in a media business that generates a lot of content, the things I learned from the BCA program are extremely useful."

Johanna Byer '09, Senior Vice President of Film and Television for Gaumont Film Company, credits BCA for landing her the internship with Brillstein Entertainment Partners that directly led to a job at the venerable talent management firm even before she graduated. "The program does a wonderful job of preparing you to at least have a fighting chance at making it in Hollywood," says Byer. Hired by Gaumont in 2017 to launch the French company's U.S. operations, she notes, "A lot of schools concentrate on the theory of film, but USC and the Business of Cinematic Arts teaches you what to do on a day to day basis. In this industry, every day you're selling a movie, or selling a star or selling a director. But the most important thing is knowing how to sell yourself, and that's what the BCA program taught me."

## A Diverse Talent Pool of Mitchell Scholars

The \$10 million "Mitchell Scholars" endowment, funded by \$5 million in Mitchell Trust dollars and \$5 million in matching funds from USC sources, will expand ongoing efforts to support talented students from diverse backgrounds. As Dean Daley observes, "These are not cheap educations, and right now 70 to 80 percent of our students need financial aid. We want to make sure qualified people who don't come from rich families have the opportunity to study here if they're interested in the business of entertainment."

Trustee Allen hopes the scholarship program attracts student from a wide variety of backgrounds. He says, "Diversity was really important to John, which I discovered when I went through his archives and came across memos he wrote to other TV executives urging them to hire more women and people of color. And quite frankly, when I went to USC in the seventies, most of my classmates were white males. Even then, it struck me that we needed to do a better job of diversifying the industry so, at CBS I helped manage the network's minority writers program. When I shared that experience with Pat, she agreed that this gift should help students who wouldn't normally find pathways into the industry. Especially now that television and movies have become a truly global industry, we want to create opportunities for people from different cultures to create and distribute content throughout the world. These diverse voices are only going to enhance the industry's economic fortunes and improve the creative product itself."

With the initial Mitchell gift scheduled to take full effect next year, Allen notes that more money will become available in the form of matching funds aligned with like-minded donors. He says, "I still have \$20 million left and I believe many leaders in this industry are looking to further the ethical, multi-disciplinary training of a more diverse candidate pool. For the next round, I openly invite those leaders to avail themselves of matching dollars from the Mitchell Trusts. If potential donors ask me, under certain scenarios, 'Do you want to advance our mutual interests?' -- the answer is 'Yes!'"



(Opposite Page) Philanthropist Patricia W. Mitchell bequeathed funds to support entertainment business programs at USC, UCLA and the University of Michigan in honor of her husband, television pioneer John H. Mitchell. (TOP) SCA alumnus Bill Allen, trustee of the Patricia W. Mitchell Trusts. (ABOVE) Bonnie Chi, is the inaugural holder of the John H. Mitchell Endowed Chair in the Business of Entertainment

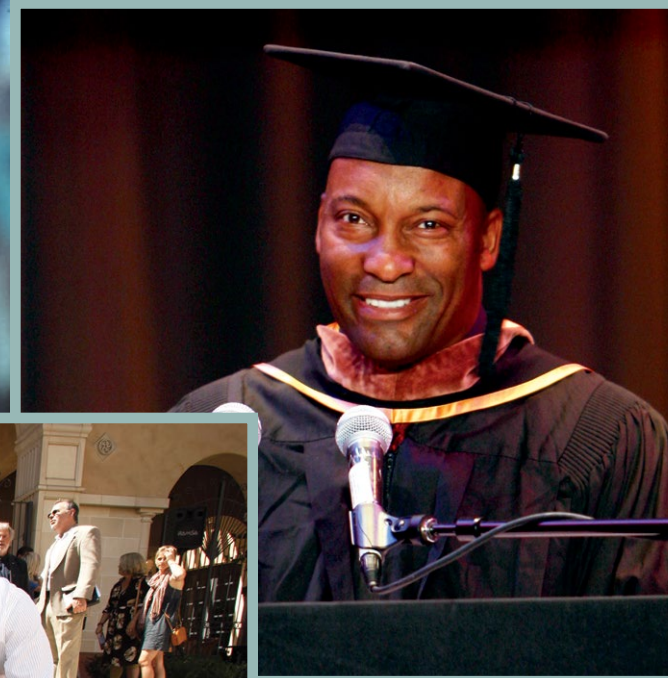




# A TRANSFORMATIVE TROJAN

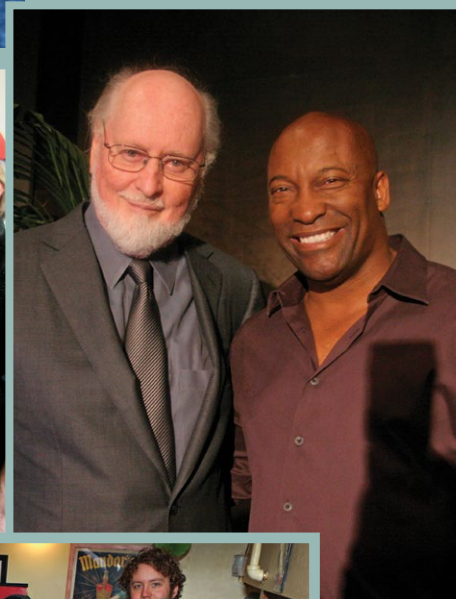
JOHN SINGLETON'S INFLUENCE  
ON A NEW GENERATION OF FILMMAKERS

By Desa Philadelphia



■ In Spring 2017, the School of Cinematic Arts' newly re-launched Council on Diversity and Inclusion initiated a speaker series that was in search of an inaugural guest. It had to be someone able and willing to come to campus, and whom people would show up for. A plus would be if he or she had some association with the School—an alumnus or parent maybe. And, of course, they had to have something profound (or at least interesting) to say about the need for an increased focus on diversity and inclusion at the School, and in the media industry.

■ As the council discussed who it should invite, a few hot-right-now names emerged. But each would come up short on at least one of the important criteria. Finally, someone said the obvious choice: **John Singleton**. But would he have the time to come to campus to speak to students? Especially for a no-frills speaker series for which there wouldn't be much publicity. His answer: He would make the time.



TOP: (left to right) Singleton on the *Boyz n the Hood* set; receiving the Pickford Award at graduation. MIDDLE: With fellow alums during construction of the new Cinematic Arts Complex, with composer John Williams, with (l-r) Stephen Sommers, Peter Segal and Dean Elizabeth Daley at the unveiling of the School's Hollywood Walk of Fame star. BOTTOM: With fellow Trojans at the Sundance Film Festival.



Singleton, who died on April 29, 2019, at age 51, after suffering a massive stroke, always made time for the School of Cinematic Arts and its students. A Los Angeles native, Singleton belonged to every subset of the SCA family. He had been a student, graduating from the Filmic Writing program (now the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television) in 1990. His thesis script, which he insisted on directing because it was based on his own life, became the phenomenally successful film *Boyz n the Hood*, that had a breakout debut at the Cannes Film Festival and made Singleton the youngest person and first African-American nominated for a directing Oscar.



Bob Gubbrith / AP

Singleton was also a dedicated USC alumnus, making appearances at many University events, even returning to teach a class. He was the 2006 recipient of SCA's Mary Pickford Award, given to a distinguished alumnus at graduation each year; and in 2016 he received a Legacy Award from the University's Black Alumni Association. He was an active member of the

SCA Alumni Development Council and was also an SCA parent, having inspired two of his children—daughter Justice and son Maasai—to enroll at the School.

Importantly, Singleton was always enthusiastic in his advocacy of SCA, telling audiences over the years that it was his education at the School that gave him the tools to be the first “Black film brat,” by which he meant that he was the first African-American writer/director who had creative control of his studio-financed projects. At the Diversity Council event, he talked about his storied career and took questions well after the allotted time. He was doing the council a favor by agreeing to kick off the series, but it was apparent that he was in his element, genuinely enjoying himself. His children say that, apart from his directing, the thing Singleton loved most was engaging young people.

“To have him as a father was very much like having the cool teacher around because he would always have something that he wanted to teach or he wanted to share that he learned or that he was learning,” says Justice Singleton. “He was very much on his own adventure and he would sort of take us along with him.”

Maasai Singleton agrees. “The term ‘teacher’ is pretty accurate,” he says. “I guess the primary lesson from him is just constantly learning, trying to edify yourself, trying to be the best at whatever you do and study it as a craft.”

It was this dedication to seeking out the best that led Singleton to find USC. Growing up in South Central Los Angeles, his mother's apartment was across from the Century Drive-in. Singleton would watch films from the window, unable to hear the sound but learning how to follow the story through its imagery. The experience was his first lesson in film language and assembly, and sparked his unwavering interest in the medium. As a high school student, Singleton began writing movie reviews for his school newspaper and discovered another influential place: the USC film school. Although it was a part of the neighborhood, USC was a world apart; a predominantly white, affluent outpost that seemed a different, unwelcoming, world to its mostly-Black South Los Angeles neighbors. But determining that it was the best place to learn how to be a filmmaker, Singleton began roaming the halls of SCA, making himself at home by talking to people who worked there, asking questions about how to get in. He would also watch films in the cinema stacks at Doheny Memorial Library with help from the staff who, he said, just assumed he was a student. It was at Doheny that he discovered his favorite screenwriter/director, Akira Kurosawa, and his masterpiece *Seven Samurai*, which would influence Singleton's work, especially the way he focused on things like setting, sound, and his characters' physical gestures in his storytelling. “Even if you don't understand the dialogue, what happens is very emotional,” he said about the set pieces in the film. “There are various themes that are playing out non-verbally.”

Once he was accepted to SCA, Singleton was determined to do well. He had applied to the Writing program because the intel he had gathered said it was easier to get into than Film Production. But, as one of a few Black students who had ever enrolled, he knew he could make a way for others. “I had a big chip on my shoulder at



David Livingston, Getty Images



With fellow alumni (left to right), Jennifer Todd, Stacey Sher and Kevin Feige at the School's 90th Anniversary Celebration, held at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences in April 2019.

first,” he is quoted as saying in *Reality Ends Here*, a book about the School's history. “I was constantly staving off feelings of alienation, but because of that I felt I had to make sure people knew I was very secure in who I was and where I came from.” Stephen Barnes, a fellow USC alumnus who became Singleton's friend and lawyer, says there was no doubt Singleton would succeed. “John, by sheer force of will, put himself in a position to go to USC,” says Barnes, adding that Singleton “took pleasure in making sure people knew that the only thing he was missing was opportunity.”

The Writing program had only been established four years before Singleton arrived on campus, and he effectively became its first superstar student. He won the Jack Nicholson Screenwriting Award, given to a promising film school student, two years in a row: first in 1988 for *Twilight Time*, about women mourning their mother; then the following year for *Boyz n the Hood*, which he wrote as his senior thesis on a campus library computer. Deri Leong Miller, who was a counselor at the School and formed a friendship with Singleton, said it was always apparent that he was happy to be at USC. “He always said hello, he was always walking around talking to people, and he was very curious,” says Miller. “John was always positive, very grateful to be in the program and he would have gone on to graduate (school) except that *Boyz n the Hood* led to other things.”

*Boyz n the Hood* (1991) led to transformative things. It stunned Cannes with advertisements that featured graffiti and a concert by Ice Cube. Made for \$6 million, it grossed \$57.5 million during its studio run and introduced Hollywood to a slate of then-unknown talent—Cuba Gooding Jr., Ice Cube, Morris Chestnut, Laurence Fishburne, Angela Bassett, Nia Long—all of whom would become household names. And it gave the world a new version of Los Angeles, one that Singleton described as “sunshine and bullets.”

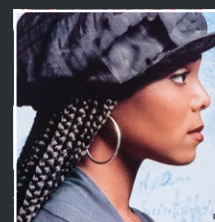
Boyz also helped the School land an especially important advocate. Frank Price had greenlit the movie for Columbia Pictures and famously thought Singleton could direct it despite his lack of experience. When Price was asked in 1991 to form a Board of Councilors to help the School, he already had a personal connection. As he put it: “If John Singleton was any indication of the kind of talent the School produces, then I wanted to help.” Price, who still chairs the Board and is a USC trustee, has played an outsized role in helping to build the School's endowment and reputation.

Singleton's success also created a model for other aspiring Black filmmakers. Rick Famuyiwa, who also grew up in a South Los Angeles neighborhood around the same time and makes films about the city, including *The Wood* (1999) and *Dope* (2015), describes Boyz's success as “life changing,” and Singleton as the example of what living the dream could look like. “His success really planted the idea that it was possible that a kid from my background, which was similar to his, could actually make it. He was this young Black filmmaker that was a product of the hip-hop generation and the same L.A. neighborhoods I lived in. There were two filmmakers that inspired me to apply to USC: George Lucas and John Singleton.”

Producer and director Sheldon Candis, a Baltimore native, said Singleton influenced his choosing to come to the west coast. “I admired Spike. I wanted to be John. When I discovered he went to USC Film School, I had to go there,” says Candis. “(*Boyz n the Hood*) had the greatest lasting impression on me. It was the first time I had ever witnessed our cultural collective story on screen told so

## CAREER

**Boyz n the Hood** 1991  
Director, Writer • Oscar Nom • NAACP Image



**Michael Jackson: Remember the Time** 1992  
Director

**Poetic Justice** 1993  
Director, Writer, Producer

**Higher Learning** 1995  
Director, Writer, Producer



**Rosewood** 1997  
Director • Berlin Nom

**Woo** 1998  
Producer

**Shaft** 2000  
Director, Writer, Producer



**Baby Boy** 2001  
Director, Writer, Producer

**2 Fast 2 Furious** 2003  
Director

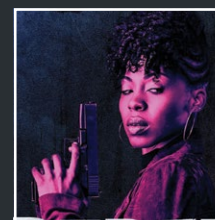
**Time Out** 2004  
Producer



**Hustle & Flow** 2005  
Producer

**Four Brothers** 2005  
Director • NAACP Image

**Black Snake Moan** 2006  
Producer



**Illegal Tender** 2007  
Producer

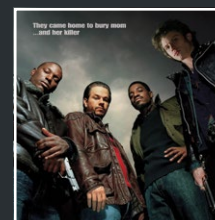
**30 for 30 Marion Jones: Press Pause** 2010  
Director

**Abduction** 2011  
Director



**Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People** 2014  
Producer

**Empire** 2015  
Director



**American Crime Story** 2016  
Director • Emmy Nom, DGA nom, NAACP Image

**Rebel** 2017  
Director, Producer

**L.A. Burning: The Riots 25 Years Later** 2017  
Producer • Emmy Nom



**Billions** 2017  
Director

**Snowfall** 2017  
Director, Writer, Producer



emotionally true and honest with one of us at the helm, authoring our American story. Every character felt like family. The experience was too real. We mourned when Ricky dies. The movie plays on an endless loop in my heart.”

“We all knew what was possible by going to USC. John made it all real,” says Famuyiwa. “John was about four or five years ahead of me, so we were never there at the same time, but his presence and impact were definitely felt. His legend as a film student who wrote *Boyz n the Hood* and went on to direct it to an Oscar nomination was an inspiration for all USC film students of all races.”

In the two decades since Singleton graduated, filmmakers like Famuyiwa, Candis, Ryan Coogler, Steven Caple Jr., and Tina Mabry, to name just a few, who want to tell stories that are uniquely African-American, have found encouragement at the School. As Famuyiwa points out, the dichotomy between the university and its surrounding neighborhood is still undeniable to students of color when they first find themselves on the campus. “What was always curious and fascinating to me about USC is it was, and I guess to some extent still is, this island of White Privilege in the middle of a Black neighborhood,” says Famuyiwa. “So there was always a bit of cognitive dissonance associated with life at USC. I was at USC during the L.A. uprising in 1992, so that contrast was very stark.” But Singleton’s success helped lessen that gap, giving space for these filmmakers and others to see themselves reflected in the culture of USC, and for USC to start acting like a more entrenched member of the South L.A. community.

Justice Singleton says her father’s influence was apparent everywhere they went in the city. “It was almost like a daily thing to learn that you know someone who was inspired by him or in L.A. someone would recognize him or he had students who grew up in Los Angeles who he was mentoring,” she says. “For me it almost felt like he was certainly a Black artist who represented Los Angeles. And that was really special because now that I really think about it there weren’t a lot of Black artists who were doing that in Hollywood and he was one of the only ones who was doing it in L.A.”

In Spring 2016, Singleton brought his mentorship to campus, teaching a class in the Division of Cinema & Media Studies titled “Emergence of Multicultural Cinema.” Alumnus Steven Taylor, who came to the School from Trinidad & Tobago, said the class was best when Singleton talked about his own experiences on set and in the industry. Soon stories about his stories started making their way outside the classroom. “Everyone wanted to be in John’s class even if they weren’t registered,” says Taylor. “I actually had to arrive

early to grab a seat because the class size kept growing once word got around.” Taylor says Singleton also told the students they could ask him anything, so they did. “He set a tone that was rid of egos. Honestly his classroom represented USC’s

widely diverse student populace and provided a safe space for us to examine the industry.”

Recent graduate StarVictoria (MFA Production, 2019) had heard that Singleton was a great mentor and decided to reach out to him when she started work on her thesis film, *La Ruta*, about a young Mexican mother trying to make the brutal desert crossing into the United States with her young daughter. Victoria had always been drawn to Singleton’s second feature, *Poetic Justice* (1993), because the film featured the poetry of Maya Angelou, whom she loved. “Seeing a movie that intertwined Maya Angelou’s poetry with story was so cool to me. I wanted to know all about the director



With the cast of *Boyz n the Hood* (left to right), Cuba Gooding Jr., Ice Cube and Morris Chestnut in South Central Los Angeles, 1990. MPTVIMAGES.COM

who created such a dope movie; that’s when I began to know who John Singleton was,” says Victoria. The Production Division pairs students with industry mentors to help them through the thesis process and once Victoria’s project got approval she started dreaming about who that person might be. “One night while trying to craft my story, I was having a writer’s block moment, so I took a break and decided to watch *Four Brothers* (2005), another favorite of mine,” she says. “After it ended, it had gotten in my mind that I would like to have John as my mentor. So I took to the internet, went on his IMDB Pro, hit the contact button and low and behold, his email was there. So I emailed him.” Victoria got a response from Singleton’s assistant saying he would be in touch but after a month passed with no further contact she decided to try one more time, thinking nothing would come of it. “The next day I got an email from John and he gave me his phone number. I text him right away and asked him when the best time would be for me to call and he said, ‘right now is good.’”

After Singleton died, School of Cinematic Arts Dean Elizabeth Daley reached out to his family and offered the School as a location for his memorial, which was held at Bovard Auditorium

With fellow alumnus, director Tim Story

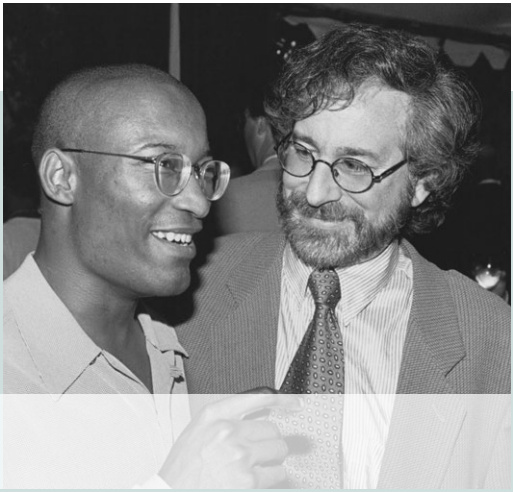
## HONORS

### Hollywood Walk of Fame Star

2003

### African-American Film Critics Association Special Achievement Award

2015



With Steven Spielberg

With his career it’s as if Singleton was saying to the generations that follow him: Forget trying to get a foot in the door; Hollywood should be holding the door open for you. This is especially true for the students who roam the halls at SCA; halls adorned with posters from his films.

Perhaps the secret to Singleton’s success as both a filmmaker and a teacher was that, deep down, he always remained a student at heart. “When he was learning something, he’d want to share it. That impulse to want

to better yourself and want to learn is related to the impulse to teach. To want to share knowledge with others as well,” says Maasai Singleton, adding that SCA played an important role in his father’s lifelong education. “I felt like USC was both his playground and how he became disciplined. Because he realized as a person of color at that School he had to be very rigid (to succeed).”

SCA always remained Singleton’s home. On April 11, 2019, just three weeks before he died, he took the stage of the Samuel Goldwyn Theater at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences with fellow alumni, producers Kevin Feige, Stacey Sher and Jennifer Todd for “An Evening with Distinguished USC Alumni,” an event celebrating the School’s 90th anniversary. He spoke of returning to the School often, slipping into one of the back rows of Norris Cinema Theatre. When class was over, he would stick around to chat and answer questions. Where other filmmakers would quick-exit to avoid students’ questions about getting their scripts read or that first on-set job, Singleton would make his presence known, quickly gathering up an entourage.

“Nine times out of ten, the kids don’t know who I am or whatever. But if they do we sit and talk,” Singleton recalled fondly. “They are just like we were. They have a fresh excitement, if they don’t have a vision right now, for finding out what they want to do within this industry, and that’s really good to be around.”



The School of Cinematic Arts and the USC Black Alumni Association have established the **John Singleton Scholarship for the Arts at USC** to support students of color who are pursuing degrees in the arts at the university. For more information and to contribute to the Scholarship fund, visit [cinema.usc.edu/singleton](http://cinema.usc.edu/singleton).



# Storytelling Diplomacy

THE AMERICAN FILM SHOWCASE ENTERS ITS NINTH YEAR OF EXPORTING AMERICAN CINEMA

By Matt Meier



## Storytelling has the power to change the world.

It's an aphorism frequently spoken here at the USC School of Cinematic Arts, one we wholly believe. American Film Showcase (AFS), SCA's State Department-funded program, puts that belief into action. AFS launched in 2011 as a "film diplomacy program" with twenty weeklong workshops and screening series in twenty countries. Since then, AFS has produced more than 245 unique programs in 111 countries, making it the largest arts exchange program of the U.S. Government.

Funded by and operated in collaboration with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State—which also oversees the Fulbright Scholarship and other cultural exchange programs—AFS's work is grounded in the belief that authentic stories can counter political narratives and build new bridges of empathy between nations. Initially the program only focused on sending American films and their directors to various nations for screenings and Q&As. Films like *Mad Hot Ballroom*, *Spellbound* and *Undeclared*, which won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature, were chosen because they told stories of American life that didn't usually make it into Hollywood films. In recent years AFS's work has expanded significantly. While they still tour an annual slate of films, AFS also produces workshops that train filmmakers around the world in how to tell their own stories.

"Global issues such as freedom of speech, economic opportunity and women's empowerment are the kinds of challenges creators are grappling with but might not know how to incorporate into a film or TV show," says Rachel Gandin Mark, Program Director for AFS and SCA's Director of International Programs. "We send some of the best American media professionals abroad to lead workshops on creating compelling narratives. It's about empowering local creators to tell their own stories."

AFS also collaborates with U.S. Embassies around the globe to produce ten-day regional workshops on screenwriting narrative filmmaking, animation, and game design. Workshop participants are recruited from multiple countries in a region and represent some of their countries' most talented up-and-coming storytellers. A television writing seminar in Moldova, for example, brought in aspiring talents from neighboring Romania, Latvia, and Lithuania. "All of them were hungry to develop TV series, rich in character, that could reflect their native cultures and offer their respective audiences alternative programming to the overwhelming Russian broadcast presence in the region," says Writing Professor David Isaacs, who led the workshop. Isaacs was also recruited to help launch the Middle East Media Initiative (MEMI), an AFS sister program that is also funded by the U.S. State Department. MEMI supports writers and producers from Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates in creating nuanced, character-driven television series for their home markets.

AMERICAN  
FiLM  
SHOWCASE



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: SCA professor David Isaacs (R), TV film writer Mort Nathan (L) and Arab TV writers who participated in a training at SCA. Filmmakers Patric Shen (M) and Tim Skousen (R) teach young filmmakers in Jordan. SCA alum/filmmaker Jason Zeldes and poet Donté Clark with students in Indonesia. Visual effects animator Dariush Derakhshani being interviewed in Armenia.



SCA Professor DJ Johnson (front row second from left) led a documentary workshop for West African filmmakers

AFS also hosts annual workshops at the School of Cinematic Arts and recently brought creative teams from six countries (Colombia, Belgium, Georgia, Italy, Mongolia, Uganda) for a workshop on developing multimedia projects for social impact. The projects explored issues like human trafficking, ethnic identity, education, and civic engagement. "I learned a great deal from these international creators I worked with about what change might look like in the specific cultural context of their respective countries," says DJ Johnson, Associate Professor of Cinema in the Division of Media Arts + Practice, who led the workshops. Johnson, who has also taught AFS workshops in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mauritania, says the experiences help him develop curricula for his SCA students that emphasize: "developing a global worldview and an orientation towards creating socially-conscious, ethical media."

Alan Baker, SCA's Associate Dean of Administration and International Projects, oversees all the School's international programs, and likes to tell a story from one of AFS's earliest programs in Russia. The screening was of Carolyn Jones' *The American Nurse* (2014), featuring portraits of five nurses across the United States working in tough situations to heal patients. One audience member said that, "Before this film, I had learned that all Americans are selfish, that they don't do anything for anyone else." Baker says that the film allowed her to see that Americans—like Russians or people from anywhere else—

could also be compassionate. "Seeing the film really opened her eyes to a different part of America," says Baker.

As it enters its ninth year, AFS programming now covers many genres of storytelling: A recent workshop on sketch comedy was held in the Middle East, an animation workshop in Laos was so successful there will be a second edition, and a game design program will debut in Eastern Europe. AFS is even scheduling workshops on producing reality television. "American storytelling appeals to audiences and creators around the world," says Gandin Mark. "And that makes it a powerful tool for diplomacy."







## A NEW VARSITY TROJAN TEAM TAKES THE (VIRTUAL) FIELD

**It's only one o'clock on a sunny fall afternoon but Hovik Terovsepyan has already died twice. To be more precise, his *League of Legends* (LoL) avatar was digitally destroyed by enemy forces deployed remotely by players in a practice scrimmage.**

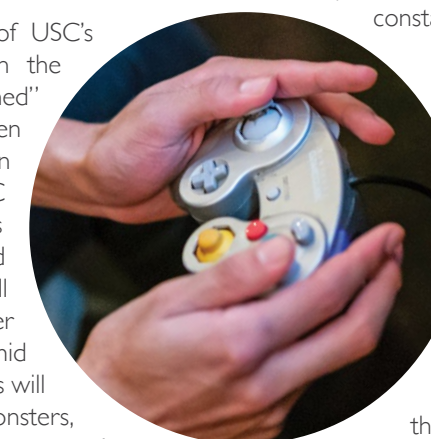
Fortunately for Terovsepyan, a member of USC's new Esports Union, death is fleeting in the massively popular game, so he "re-spawned" and lived to fight another day. Now, between matches, he is hanging out with half a dozen twentysomething teammates on the USC *League of Legends* Varsity Team. They pass the time playing old-fashioned analog card games. But the serious competition will soon resume on a row of identical computer screens lined up against the wall. There, amid explosive bursts of color, the student players will destroy turrets, slay dragons, kill jungle monsters, demolish "minions" and try to annihilate the enemy's home base known as "Nexus."

To become proficient in the medieval fantasy-themed *League of Legends* universe, players need lightning-fast reflexes, prodigious memorization skills, and acute powers of analysis to master the game's dense constellation of special powers unleashed by 145 warrior characters known as "Champions." Each warrior is fortified by "items" purchased with "gold" earned by killing enemy combatants. To thrive in "battle," players invest hundreds of hours learning the game's intricacies. What's the payoff? "Honestly, it's a good way to decompress," says Terovsepyan, a USC Marshall School of Business junior who started playing the game at age 11. "Especially in college, it's fun to play *League of Legends* because it's a temporary escape from real life."

Marshall classmate William Huang sets down his cards for a minute and points out that video game expertise these days can also be leveraged into lucrative professional careers. "I grew up with *League*, but when I started playing, there wasn't all this franchising and money involved. Now, pro players can make hundreds of thousands of dollars," Huang says. "They're doing the same thing professional football players do, which is to provide entertainment for millions of people around the world."

All of the Esports Union team members initially locked into videogame culture as kids, though few match *League of Legends* competitor Ulysses Quesada in terms of early immersion. "I've been playing video games since before I could walk," says Quesada, a sophomore from Milwaukee majoring in biochemistry with an eye on a pediatrics career.

Hovering quietly over the players is Head Coach, Joseph Jacko. A superstar LoL competitor at Virginia Tech, Jacko graduated last spring and joined USC's Esports Union program in September. His biggest challenge? "Everyone's got a different playing style," Jacko says. "We're trying to sort through all of that and teach our players that sometimes you need to sacrifice your lead for your teammate to succeed. This is something we're constantly working on."



With minimal fanfare, the players drift over to the computers, put on headsets and find their places on the virtual *League of Legends* landscape, dominated by a central jungle and three paths, known as lanes. Garrett Krichbaum, a muscular USC Viterbi School of Engineering data science graduate student and former weight lifter, plays champion Syndra in the Middle Lane; Brandon Gunning, taking on the role of champion Caitlyn, focuses on the Bottom Lane; Cameron Phan, as champion Morgana, provides all-around support; and Huang plays the aggressive Renekton in the Top Lane. University of Illinois gamers 2000 miles away remotely activate their forces on the field of battle and the room fills with the sounds of keyboard clacking and mile-a-minute chatter: "I got two!" shouts Phan. "He looks pretty squishy," observes Krichbaum, using the slang descriptor for a soft target.

After a half-an-hour of mouse-and-keyboard-maneuvering, the match ends in narrow defeat for the Trojans. Coach Jacko, who will present a detailed post-mortem a few days later, tells his players: "You guys played pretty well for the first 25 minutes."

This *League of Legends* team constitutes the leading edge of USC's Esports Union, which is managed by USC Games, a program jointly supervised by the School of Cinematic Arts and Viterbi School of Engineering. Keanu Concepcion, Interactive Media & Games Division Class of '19, who now works as a production coordinator at Firefly Games, began pushing for the creation of an esports program in the fall of 2017. USC Games Professor and Head of Marketing and Strategy, Jim Huntley recalls, "Keanu was an esports fanatic and kept insisting that the University invest behind an official esports initiative. We turned him down repeatedly, until he finally pushed back and said, 'We've been the number one game design school for almost

# Esports Arrives at USC



ten years running. So how is it that other schools have an official program and we don't? It was hard to argue against that logic."

Huntley, working with Danny Bilson, Director of USC Games and Chair of the School of Cinematic Arts' Interactive Media & Games Division, and SCA Dean Elizabeth Daley, took the lead in assembling the Esports Union infrastructure, which now includes Arnold Ha (ESU Director), Clara Chu (ESU Associate Director), Andrew Obeso (ESU Promotions & Outreach), Yifan Meng (ESU Technical Director), and Co-Advisors Gordon Bellamy and Collin Kelly. For their initial push into MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena) territory, Huntley and team prioritized *League of Legends*, a game devised 10 years ago by USC alumni Brandon Beck and Marc Merrill, co-founders of Riot Games. "We wanted to do this thoughtfully," says Huntley. "Other schools might launch 12 teams simultaneously, but if they're not well-financed or operationally stable, those teams are only going to have middling success. We made the strategic decision to start with one game and do it right. Once we make all of our mistakes with that one, then we can

support and provide resources for additional games, successfully."

USC's embrace of esports comes at a time when video game culture has made significant strides expanding its reach to mainstream audiences. Esports attract about 380 million fans worldwide with global revenue estimated to reach \$1.4 billion in 2020. CBS has ordered a sitcom focused on NBA athlete-turned esports entrepreneur Rick Fox. Washington Post recently debuted the "Launcher" section devoted exclusively to esports coverage. Individual stars captivate the public imagination, as when sixteen-year-old *Fortnite* World Cup winner Kyle "Bugha" Giersdorf earned \$3 million over the summer by beating 100 competitors (whittled down from 40 million entrants) at Arthur Ashe Stadium in New York. Tyler 'Ninja' Blevins, esports' most popular streamer, makes about \$600,000 a month on the strength of his 12-million member fan base. Bullish on esports-as-spectacle, Blizzard Entertainment recently opened L.A.'s first dedicated esports arena. Last year, the *League of Legends* World Championship finals in South Korea drew the Super Bowl, pulling in nearly 100 million online viewers. Reflecting the rising currency of video games, Esports Union has attracted sponsors, including computer company MSI and production company Om Films, that provide financial and material support to the program. Because esports falls outside the purview of the NCAA, varsity student players are currently eligible to receive cash stipends.

In addition to the MOBA tournaments that galvanize USC's competitive efforts, Esports Union hopes to collaborate on new curricula pegged to esports. "There are a few different paths we're considering," Huntley says. "On the business side, we'd love to partner with Marshall on how to operationally build, fund and manage an esports team. And since social media and marketing exposure plays such a big role in the success of esports, we'd like to partner with the USC Annenberg School of Communications on classes that teach best practices in that space."

A significant challenge faced by esports practitioners is the lack of gender diversity represented in most male-dominated esports rosters. Huntley says, "We're extremely cognizant of the strength and value of inclusivity in our program and throughout the University. Esports, across the board, need to have better gender balance, especially in front of the camera. Unfortunately, the biggest barrier to more gender inclusion is that there's a lot of community toxicity. At USC, we have a zero-tolerance policy regarding players being toxic, but speaking more generally, women who play *League of Legends* tell me they turn off their mics because, as soon as other players hear their voice, all sorts of inappropriate stuff gets said. That understandably turns a lot of women players off."

Whether or not Esports Union immediately produces a new generation of full-time *League of Legends* professionals, Huntley believes the program can play an invaluable role in grooming students for success in the real world. "Just like football, basketball or baseball, esports develop a student's ability to collaborate in a professional environment. We all have to learn how to take feedback constructively, figure out other people's rhythms, learn their styles and how they like to communicate. We are not necessarily looking for social butterflies, but we do need players who can engage with others in a positive way. If you pick up those skills in an esports environment, it's only going to help when students go out into the real world."



# In MEMORIAM



**Frank Biondi Jr.**  
(1945-2019)  
Executive

**Frank Biondi Jr. was a member of SCA's Board of Councilors**

Biondi's storied career in entertainment saw him serve in chief executive positions at HBO, Viacom, and Universal Studios. Following a career on Wall Street, Biondi helped turn HBO into a television powerhouse, the model for premium subscription channels. He was also instrumental in Viacom's transformation into one of the largest companies in the entertainment industry. He is survived by his wife, Caro (Oughton) Biondi, his daughters Anne Simonds and Jane Biondi Munna, six grandchildren, and a brother, Robert.



**Justin Accardi**  
(1998-2019)  
SCA Student

**Justin Accardi was a Sophomore studying Business of Cinematic Arts (BCA)**

Justin Accardi loved music, theatre and film. While at USC he sang acapella with UnderSCore, performed sketch comedy with SC2, and was a recipient of a USC Dean's scholarship. He is survived by his parents, Selena and Jim, who established the Justin Accardi Foundation for the Arts to provide financial support to cinematic arts students whose projects reflect Justin's belief in the positive impact of the arts.



**Rey Christian Hunt**  
(1977-2019)  
Alumnus

**Rey Christian Hunt got his BA in the Production program**

A Chicago native, Hunt moved to Los Angeles to attend SCA and graduated in 2016. He was a writer, director and producer who owned Catalyst, a production company in Newport Beach, California. He was also a pastor. Hunt died of lung cancer. He is survived by his wife, Heather; their son, Jaiden; and his parents, Dr. Ann Love and Ronald C. Hunt.



**John Lynch**  
(1995-2019)  
SCA Student

**John Lynch was a Junior in the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television**

Lynch had a vivacious personality and was a talented comedic writer and stand-up performer. He was known across the university for moderating the Facebook page "USC Memes for Spoiled Pre-Teens." He is survived by his mother, Sheila Murphy, brother Erik Lynch, and sister Stephanie Lynch-Habib.



**John Moore**  
(1998-2019)  
SCA Student

**John Moore was a Senior in the Division of Film & Television Production**

Moore had a penchant for non-stop movie references and an outspoken affinity for classic rock. Although he was a student of film production, his talent as a screenwriter and film scholar resulted in friendships across the SCA divisions. Moore hailed from Sonoma County, CA, and attended St. Eugene's Catholic School and Cardinal Newman High School, where a memorial fund has been set up in remembrance. He is survived by his parents, Bruce and Eileen; and his older siblings, sister Stephanie and brothers Stephen, Patrick and Robert.





## Mardik Martin

By **Howard Rodman**, Professor and former Chair of the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television, and former President of the Writers Guild of America West.

Our friend and colleague Mardik Martin passed away on September 11 at the age of 84. Long a mainstay of the School of Cinematic Arts' John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television, where he began teaching in the Spring of 1986, Mardik—compact, energetic, blunt—inspired two generations of screenwriters to do their best work until his retirement in October of 2014.

His collaborations with fellow NYU student Martin Scorsese are the stuff of legend: *Mean Streets* (1973); *New York, New York* (1977); *Raging Bull* (1980); all of which Mardik co-wrote. Said Scorsese: "For a time, we were inseparable. We went to see movies together, we talked about them endlessly, and then we started dreaming up the pictures we were going to make—in diner booths and on benches in Washington Square Park, walking the streets of Lower Manhattan or driving around the city, in hot and cold weather, in sunshine and in rain and snow, by night and by day."

Mardik also wrote Ken Russell's *Valentino* (1977), collaborated on Scorsese's *The Last Waltz* (1978), and most recently wrote Fatih Akin's *The Cut* (2014), a drama set against the backdrop of the Armenian genocide. He was nominated for a WGA Award for *Mean Streets*, and for a Golden Globe for *Raging Bull*. He was given the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2007 Arpa International Film Festival in Hollywood.

Mardik's own journey was as exceptional as his films. An Armenian, born September 16, 1934, in Iran, and raised in Iraq as the son of a bookstore owner. He fell in love with the movies, and somehow found his way to New York: ostensibly to study business, but in reality to immerse himself in cinema. He attended NYU by day and worked as a waiter at the legendary Toots Shor's by night.

He led a full-to-the-brim life, heaped up with writing, collaboration, community, teaching, and no small amount of celebration. Ramy Katrib and Evan York's inventive and affecting documentary on Mardik's life and work, *Mardik: Baghdad to Hollywood* (2008), tells the story of his extraordinary voyage.

Mardik leaves us having made a deep and abiding impact on the lives of his students and fellow faculty. We at SCA are fortunate to have been, for so many years, his home port.



## Norm Hollyn

by **Brenda Goodman**, Professor of Practice of Cinematic Arts in the Division of Film & Television Production and Head of the Producing Track.

Norm and I came to USC around the same time in the late '90s. I remember hanging out with him in his office on the outside corner of the Marcia Lucas Building, the former home of post and animation. There he could hold court and greet all passersby.

We taught many courses together at USC, but our paths had crossed years before when I was the assistant director for Liz Swados and John Cainmaker on a film called *What Do Children Think of When They Think of the Bomb* and Norm was the editor.

Often in filmmaking the production side does not know or interact with the post side, but Norm did not believe in that division. He believed in the integration of production and post and saw all of us as storytellers. Like so many other filmmakers, I kept a copy of Norm's *Film Editing Room Handbook*, first published in 1984, by my bedside.

Norm was an educator before he fully embraced that title. Indispensable if you needed to know A wind from B wind. At USC, Norm was always looking for a way to integrate the editing curriculum in all the classes. He worked with all the tracks, all the divisions, and many schools. Norm taught animation classes, Media Arts + Practice classes, directing classes, sound and producing classes. He collaborated with the School of Architecture and probably so many more I do not know about. There is an ocean of USC students who have been educated and influenced by Norm Hollyn, as well as faculty.

When his office moved from the outer corner of Marcia Lucas to the 4th floor of SCA, his door was still open and the chairs filled with all who wanted to talk to him. Myself included. The subjects abounded: film, politics, wine (particularly red), the family he adored—his wife Janet and daughter Elizabeth. And, of course, music. Zappa or Springsteen or Jamiroquai. He loved music.

But here's the thing: every one of those folks, including me, always felt like they were the most important person in Norm's life when he was connecting with them. He had that rare ability to make you feel special, seen, and appreciated.

Several months after Norm's passing I walked by his office on the 4th floor of SCA and heard voices, talking and laughing. My heart skipped a beat. His office has been repurposed as a creative meeting space, and I know he would love that his office still generates collaborative discussion. Hearing the collaboration emanating from the room gives me solace as every day we feel the loss of Norm. He is missed.



# ALUMNI *Quicktakes*



**Malek Akkad '02** — will produce two more *Halloween* movies coming in 2020 and 2021.

**Matthew Arnold '02** — is producing *The Black Tapes*, based on the supernatural podcast, for NBC.

**Judd Apatow** — is directing an untitled comedy that will star *Saturday Night Live*'s Pete Davidson.

**Thembi Banks '14** — is set to write *Double Dutch*.

**Julian Breece '05** — is writing the script for an untitled film based on the life of Alvin Ailey.

**Steven Caple Jr. '14, Tony Rettenmaier '15, and Juel Taylor '15** — sold their short story *By All* to Legendary. Taylor and Rettenmaier wrote the short, while Caple Jr. is attached to direct the feature.

**Joey Chavez '05** — will join WarnerMedia's HBO Max as Executive Vice President of Original Drama.

**Jon M. Chu '03** — received the Motion Picture Showman of the Year Award at the Cinematographers Guild's Publicist Awards. He has also signed a four-year overall deal with 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Television.

**Ryan Coogler '11** — will write and direct the sequel to *Black Panther*. He is also producing the film *Jesus Was My Homeboy* with fellow alumni **Poppy Hanks '95** and **Sev Ohanian '12**.

**Katelyn Crabb '18** and **Casius Corrigan '14** — have been accepted into *Impact 2*, a program that empowers outside voices under a group of established industry writers and showrunners.



**Akela Cooper '06** — will be writing the sequel to *The Nun*.

**Joshua Cozine '06** — is the editor-in-chief of Stranger Comics, whose fantasy project *Asunda* has been put in development by HBO.

**Karen Croner '87** — is set to write and produce *My Glory Was I Had Such Friends* for Bad Robot.

**R.J. Cutler** — will executive produce an untitled Alicia Keys musical drama series for Showtime.

**Jeff Davis '00** — has signed an overall deal with Fox Entertainment. He is also set to produce *Night Gallery*.

**Erika Davis-Marsh '18** — her thesis Film *CODA* has won the Programmer's Choice Awards at Cleveland International Film Festival and also the Founder's Award at the Reel Abilities New York Film Festival.

**Susan Downey '95** — is set to produce the drama series *Sweet Tooth* for Hulu.

**Chris Van Dusen '03** — inked a multi-year overall deal with Netflix.

**Megan Ellison** — is producing *The Plot Against America* for HBO.

**Trevor Engelson '98** — is producing *Challenger Deep* for Disney+.

**Jason Ensler '97** — will serve as the Directing Executive Producer on *Love, Simon* for Disney+.

**Rick Famuyiwa '96** — is directing *Children of Blood and Bone*, an action fantasy film based on the *New York Times* bestselling novel by Nigerian-American author Tomi Adeyemi. **Kay Oyegun '13**, will write the script adaptation. **Gillian Bohrer '03** is supervising production on behalf of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox.

**Paul Feig '84** — will write and direct *Dark Army* for Universal Pictures.

**Stephen H. Flick '78** — received the 2018 MPSE Career Achievement Award from the Motion Picture Sound Editors Guild.

**DeVon Franklin '00** — is producing *The Garden of Eden*. DeVon is also producing a biopic about Richard Montañez, who created the spicy FLAMIN' Hot Cheetos Snack.



**Carolina Friend '16** — was awarded the fifth annual Horizon Award at Sundance for up-and-coming female directors.

**Russel Friend '95** and **Garrett Lerner '95** — are writers on *Skinny Dip*, which has been picked up by Qubii.

**Mike Gan '10** — has written and directed two new films: *School Spirit* on Hulu; and his feature film theatrical debut *Burn*, a thriller set in a gas station where a would-be bandit is captured by employees.

**David Gelb '06** — is producing two new shows for Disney+: *Marvel's 616* and *Earthkeepers*.

**Darin Goldberg '91** — is the new executive producer and showrunner of *Good Witch* on The Hallmark Channel.

**David S. Goyer '88** — signed a multi-year overall deal with Skydance Television. He is also writing and producing a re-imagining of Clive Barker's 1987 horror classic *Hellraiser*.

**Brian Grazer '74** — is producing *Swagger* with NBA superstar Kevin Durant. He is also set to produce the NBC drama *The Last Spy*.

**Josh Greenbaum** — will direct *Barb & Star Go to Vista Del Mar* for Lionsgate.

**Jason Hall** — will write and produce the cop drama *Ranger*, which has been put in development by CBS.

**Murilo Hauser '15** — wrote *The Invisible Life of Euridice Gusmao* which won Top Prize in Un Certain Regard in Cannes. *The Invisible Life of Euridice Gusmao* will be Brazil's submission in the international feature film Oscar category.

**Evan Hayes '02** — is producing *The White Room*, which has been acquired by Amblin Partners. He is also producing an untitled movie based on the Jonas Bonnier book *The Helicopter Heist*.

**Hieu Ho '07** — will produce the high concept horror-thriller *Dear David* for New Line Cinema.

**Todd Hoffman '93** — is executive producing *Modern Love*, Amazon Prime's new romantic comedy anthology series.

**Soo Hugh '06** — will be showrunning the series *Pachinko*.



**Stanley Kalu '19** and **Jason Shuman '96** — produced *The Obituary of Tunde Johnson*. Kalu wrote the screenplay, while Shuman is producing the project.

**Peter Kang '96** — is joining Columbia Pictures as Executive Vice President of Production.

**Aaron Kaplan '00** — Kapital Entertainment has been given a pilot order by HBO Max for *Delilah*, a half-hour dysfunctional family comedy. He is also producing the ABC project *Women of the Movement* (working title), alongside Jay-Z & Will Smith. The anthology series will chronicle the civil rights movement as told by the women behind it. He is also executive producing the hourlong crime drama *Wolfe* for ABC. Kaplan is also producing *Dirty* for Amazon Studios.

**Carla Kettner '79** — is writing and producing *Puller* for Fox.

**Nahnatchka Khan '94** — has signed a four-year overall producing deal with Universal Television.

**Abby Kohn '96** and **Marc Silverstein '96** — will write and direct the feature *Fantasy Camp*. Jennifer Garner is set to star.

**Justin S. Lee '15** — is a Student Academy Award-nominated writer/director and Film Independent Fellow. His TV Series *Welcome to the Scene* is receiving the Alfred P. Sloan Episodic Grant.

**Shawn Levy '94** — has signed an overall deal with Netflix for his production company 21 Laps

Entertainment. He is set to produce the coming-of-age series *I Am Not Okay With This* and reboot the true crime & paranormal series *Unsolved Mysteries*. 21 Laps Entertainment recently acquired feature rights to *Mothers, Lock Up Your Daughters Because They Are Terrifying*, *Shadow and Bone* and *Six of Crows*. Levy's other upcoming projects include Fox's *Free Guy*, with Levy directing and Ryan Reynolds starring. He is also producing *Sovereign*, a sci-fi film starring Mahersala Ali.

**Alex Litvak '95** — penned the script for *Versus*, which has been acquired by Universal Pictures.

**Katie Lovejoy '09** — is writing and executive producing the medical drama *Remedy* for Fox.

**Vince Marcello '06** — will direct the film adaptation of *The Dreyfus Affair: A Love Story*.

**Sherry Marsh '83** — is producing the adaptation of *The Banker's Wife* for Amazon Studios. She will also produce the feature adaptation of the upcoming novel *All That Heaven Allows: A Biography of Rock Hudson* for Universal Pictures.



**Gerard McMurray '11** — will write and direct *The Silver Bear* starring Michael B. Jordan.

**Steve Michaels '93** — his Asylum Entertainment Group launched Clovis Entertainment to develop and produce one-hour drama series.

**Neal Moritz '85** — is producing two reboots, *Face/Off* and *Cliffhanger*. He is also producing an untitled female ensemble action-comedy starring Sofia Vergara.

**Hiro Murai '06** — has locked a two-year deal with Makeready. The company will provide independent financing to develop and produce projects that will be feature-focused but open to non-traditional formats.

**Scott Nemes '95** — has been hired as EVP of Development and Current Programming at UCP, where he will oversee all programming for the NBCUniversal-owned studio.

**Patrick Ness** — Lionsgate has picked up an original feature pitch *The Monster*.

**Tracy Oliver '10** — Amazon Studios has ordered ten episodes of Oliver's female-focused half-hour comedy series. Oliver also signed a first-look deal at Topic Studios.

**Kay Oyegun '13** — is receiving a high six-figure deal from Paramount for her script *Assisted Living*.

**Prentice Penny '95** — has signed on to executive produce and develop HBO's *The Untamed*, based on the Asunda line of comic books. He is also writing and directing the feature film *Uncorked* for Netflix. **Jason Michael Berman '06** is producing.



**Ben Queen '96** — is producing the ABC series *Heart of Life*, inspired by a John Mayer song.

**Aaron Rahsaan Thomas '02** — signed a new two-year overall deal with Sony Pictures TV.

**Matt Reeves '98** — will produce the music-themed feature film *Idol*.

**Heather Regnier '08** — is writing the USA Network television show *Dicks*.

**Jason Reitman '99** — will write and produce a half-hour comedy series for HBO starring David Spade. He will also direct *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* for Sony Pictures.

**Tony Rettenmaier '15** and **Juel Taylor '15** — wrote the script for a feature length film chronicling the early life of NBA superstar LeBron James.

**Shonda Rhimes '94** — is producing *Bridgerton* for Netflix. Created by *Scandal* veteran **Chris Van Dusen '03**.

**Khaled Ridgeway '18** — wrote and is directing the indie comedy-drama *Death of a Telemarketer*.

**Melissa Rosenberg '90** — has a pilot order from HBO Max for her one-hour drama, *The Rules of Magic*. The story is based on Alice Hoffman's novels.



**Bobby Roth '72** — is directing *The Last Rescue*, a political thriller.

**Eric Schrier '98** — has been elevated from President of Original Programming for FX Networks and FX Prods. to the newly created position of President, FX Entertainment.

**Jac Shaeffer '04** — will be the showrunner for Disney+'s *WandaVision*.

**Jason Shuman '96** — is producing *Showtime*, a drama series about the 1980s L.A. Lakers.

**Dallas Sonnier '02** — is producing *Shut In* for New Line Cinema. He will also produce the feature-length adaptation of Preston Fassel's novel, *Our Lady of the Inferno*.

**Tim Story** — is directing Lionsgate and Hasbro's live-action feature *Monopoly*. **Sharla Sumpter Bridgett '04** will executive produce for The Story Company.

**Sarah Streicher '12** — is writing and producing *The Wilds* for Amazon Prime Video.

**Stephen Susco '00** — is adapting Robert McCammon's *Speaks The Nightbird* into a series for FX. **Mark Wolper '83** will produce.

**Jason Taylor '00** — has joined Futurism Studios as their new President of Production.

**Jennifer Todd** — is producing *Minotaur*, a supernatural thriller set in Johannesburg for Amblin Pictures.



**Jon Turteltaub '86** — is directing *Insane*, a film based on "Crazy" Eddie Antar, the late consumer electronics king who perpetrated one of the greatest securities frauds in history.

**Jeff Wadlow '01** — is directing a live-action feature based on Mattel's popular Magic 8 Ball toy.

**Melanie Wagor '08** — Directed and created the pilot for *That One Time* with Lucky 13 Productions.

**Katie Wech '02** — wrote *FML (Female Mid Life)*, for production company Windpower Entertainment and ABC Studios. Katie also wrote the pilot *Good Sam*, which CBS has put into development. She is also writing and executive producing the TV adaptation of Liane Moriarty's *The Hypnotist's Love Story* for ABC.

**Gina Welch** and **Brian Grazer '74** — are attached to *Her Body and Other Parties*, which has been picked up for development by FX. Welch will write in addition to executive producing with Grazer.

**John Wells '82** — is executive producing, the hourlong YA drama *Red Bird Lane* for HBO Max. Wells is also working on a romantic drama *My Ex-Life* for Apple. Wells is also staying at Warner Brothers after signing a new five-year overall deal.

**Max Winkler '06** — is directing *Fruitcake* starring Will Ferrell and Laura Dern.

**Carly Wray '05** — is adapting Tess Sharpe's novel *Barbed Wire Heart* for Warner Bros. Margot Robbie's Luckychap is producing.

**Randy Zisk '81** — will direct and produce *Einstein* for CBS. The show is based on the German series.

We apologize if we missed anyone. Please contact Justin Wilson at 213.740.2804 or alumni@cinema.usc.edu for more information or updates.



# FILM *and* TV RELEASES

**Ad Astra** - James Gray '91, Writer-Director; Ethan Gross '90, Writer; Gary Rydstrom '81, Sound Designer; John Axelrad '90, Editor

**Aladdin** - John August '94, Writer

**Alita: Battle Angel** - Jon Landau '83, Producer

**Always Be My Maybe** - Nahnatchka Khan '94, Director

**Avengers: Endgame** - Kevin Feige '95, Producer; Jeffrey Ford '9, Editor

**Booksmart** - Megan Ellison, Producer

**Brian Banks** - Doug Atchison '88, Writer; Greg Hayden, Editor

**Brittany Runs a Marathon** - Duncan Thum '06 '13, Composer

**Bumblebee** - Tom deSanto, Producer; Don Murphy '91, Producer; Erik Aadahl '98, Sound

**Captain Marvel** - Kevin Feige '95, Producer; Jac Schaeffer '04, Writer

**Dolemite is My Name** - Scott Alexander '85, Writer; Larry Karaszewski '85, Writer



**Isn't It Romantic** - Dana Fox '00, Writer

**Jexi** - Suzanne Todd, Producer

**John Wick: Chapter 3 - Parabellum** - Chad Stahelski '90, Director; Evan Schiff '04, Editor

**Last Christmas** - Paul Feig '84, Director

**Little** - Tracy Oliver '10, Writer

**The Lion King** - Caleb Deschanel '69, Cinematographer

**Shaft** - Tim Story '91, Director

**Spider-Man: Far From Home** - Kevin Feige '95, Producer

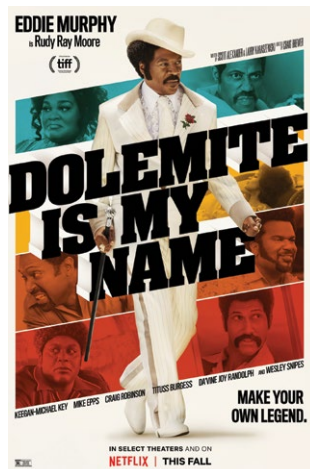
**The Sun is Also a Star** - Tracy Oliver '10, Writer

**Them That Follow** - Britt Poulton '12, Writer/Director; Dan Madison Savage '12, Writer/Director

**Toy Story 4** - Martin Hynes '96, Writer; Valerie LaPointe '07, Writer

**The Upside** - Todd Black '82, Producer

**Where'd You Go, Bernadette** - Megan Ellison, Producer



**Escape Room** - Adam Robitel '00, Director; Neal Moritz '85, Producer; Ori Marmur, Producer

**Fast Color** - Michael Fimognari '02, Director of Photography

**Gemini Man** - David Ellison, Producer

**Godzilla: King of the Monsters** - Bob Ducsay '86, Editor

**The Highwaymen** - John Schwartzman '85, Director of Photography

**Horror Noire: A History of Black Horror** - Xavier Burgin '15, Director

**The Hustle** - Jac Schaeffer '04, Writer

**Miss Bala** - Terilyn Shropshire '85, Editor

**Ms. Purple** - Justin Chon '03, Writer/Director/Producer; Ante Cheng '17, Cinematographer

**Raise Hell: The Life & Times of Molly Ivins** - Janice Engel '79, Writer/Director/Producer; Monique Zavistovski '03, Writer/Editor; James Egan, Producer

**Ready or Not** - James Vanderbilt '99, Producer; Tripp Vinson, Producer

**Replicas** - Jeffrey Nachmanoff '94, Director

**Rust Creek** - Jen McGowan '05, Director; Julie Lipson '11, Writer; Stu Pollard '95, Writer/Producer

**Armistead Maupin's Ties of the City** - Patricia Resnick '75, Writer/Co-Executive Producer

**BH90210** - Elizabeth Allen Rosenbaum '99, Director; Aaron Fullerton '07, Writer; Katie Wech '02, Writer

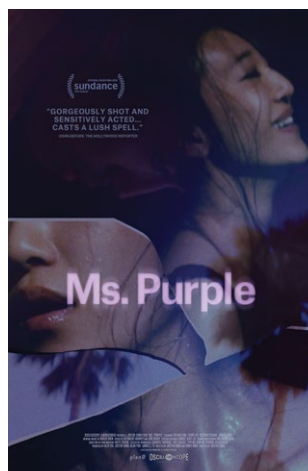
**Black Monday** - Matteo Borghese '11, Writer/Producer; Rob Turbovsky '11, Writer/Producer

**Black Summer** - Jen Derwingson '00, Supervising Producer

**Bless this Mess** - Erin O'Malley '96, Executive Producer

**The Boys** - Eric Kripke '96, Writer; Neal Moritz '85, Executive Producer; Ori Marmur '93, Executive Producer

**Catch-22** - Grant Heslov '86, Director/Executive Producer



**Chambers** - Akela Cooper '06, Writer/Executive Producer

**Chilling Adventures of Sabrina** - Lee Toland Krieger '05, Executive Producer/Director

**City on a Hill** - Chuck Maclean '11, Writer/Executive Producer; Jennifer Todd, Executive Producer

**The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance** - Javier Grillo-Marxuach '93, Writer

**Fam** - Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer

**Four Weddings and a Funeral** - Lana Cho '01, Writer



**Project Blue Book** - Robert Zemeckis '73, Executive Producer

**The Spanish Princess** - Helen Childress '91, Writer

**Special** - Ross Dinerstein '05, Producer

**Tell Me a Story** - Aaron Kaplan '90, Executive Producer; Ryan Maldonado '06, Writer/Supervising Producer

**Too Old to Die Young** - Joe Lewis '00, Executive Producer

**The Twilight Zone** - Greg Yaitanes, Director-Executive Producer

**The Umbrella Academy** - Rawson Marshall Thurber '99, Writer; Beau Bauman '01, Executive Producer

**What/If** - Charles Roven, Executive Producer; Robert Zemeckis '73, Executive Producer

**When They See Us** - Julian Breece '05, Writer

**Why Women Kill** - Brian Grazer '74, Executive Producer

**Generation** - Daniel Barnz '95, Writer/Director

**Godfather of Harlem** - Nina Yang Bongiovi, Executive Producer; Forest Whitaker, Lead Actor

**Good Trouble** - Jon M. Chu '03, Executive Producer/Director

**Grand Hotel** - Davah Avena '03, Writer/Supervising Producer

**The Haunting of Hill House** - Scott Kosar '89, Writer/Supervising Producer; Michael Fimognari '01, Director of Photography

**The Hot Zone** - Brian Wayne Peterson '97, Writer/Executive Producer; Kelly Souders '97, Writer/Executive Producer

**The Innocent Man** - Ross Dinerstein '05, Executive Producer; Sarah Feeley '01, Co-Executive Producer; Shannon Riggs, Producer; Nicola Marsh '06, Director of Photography

**The Kids are Alright** - Tim Doyle '87, Executive Producer/Writer

**L.A.'s Finest** - Brandon Sonnier '04, Writer/Executive Producer; Pam Veasey, Writer/Executive Producer; Vahan Moosekian '75, Executive Producer

**The Little Drummer Girl** - Stephen Cornwell, Executive Producer

**Now Apocalypse** - Gregg Araki '88, Writer-Producer/Director

**On Becoming a God in Central Florida** - Grant Heslov '86, Executive Producer

**The Passage** - Matt Reeves '85, Executive Producer; Jason Ensler '97, Executive Producer/Director

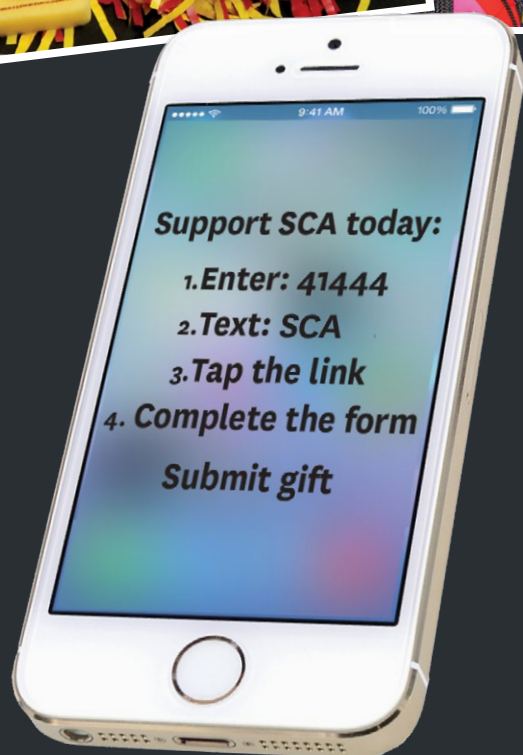




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