

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
Sir Ridley Scott

FISHING FOR IDEAS
Johnnie Frankel


SPACE EXPLORATION
Elspeth Lynn

Deutsch LA

CRIMINALLY GOOD CREATIVITY

shots





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“How much does location make a difference to the person you are, the work you do or the business you run? How much impact can the city in which you live have on your life?”



How much does location make a difference to the person you are, the work you do or the business you run? How much impact can the city in which you live have on your life? We visit Los Angeles to talk to some of the people and companies who have made the City of Angels their home, contributing to the creative culture of the town. It seems life in LA has certainly influenced the way in which they think.

Diane McArter, the managing director of LA-based production company Furlined, moved to LA from New York 15 years ago and says of her arrival, “Los Angeles [allowed me] a time of introspection and an opportunity to grow. What was once rigid, hierarchical and opaque in my life became adaptable, collaborative and transparent... I died in LA and then came alive again.”

Bold words, but it seems that LA has that ability to evoke strong feelings in people. Pete Favat, Deutsch LA’s CCO and partner, and the bus-driving cover star of this issue, gravitated towards LA because “as the blurring of lines between content, advertising and entertainment continues, so does the reason to be here. Every city goes through its ebbs and flows and, right now, Los Angeles feels like it’s happening again.”

Even Sir Ridley Scott admits to witnessing a change in the place, saying, “now you can add great restaurants and great creative energy to the city”. We go crazy for La La Land from page 46.

Elsewhere in this issue we have a nice long chat with Rattling Stick co-founder Johnnie Frankel. The producer has been involved in some of the UK’s most famous spots, including Guinness *noitulovE*. From page 66 he discusses life under some hard taskmasters, Sainsbury’s recent Christmas controversy and why being nice is always the best approach.



Above A new look for our editor this month as he sports his ‘winter plumage’, which is captured by illustrator Chris Ede, who also sketches the LA landscape for this issue’s Los Angeles special (page 46)

1 Johnnie Frankel dishes up his philosophies of life and work – be nice, work hard, play hard and if anyone doesn’t like you, ‘fuck ‘em’ – from page 66

2 This is the work of iPad artist Susan Murtaugh, one of the pioneers of mobile digital art, whose work and impact we explore from page 39

We also hear from M&C Saatchi London’s executive creative director, Elspeth Lynn, who tells us why space plays a big part in her life [page 30], and the anonymous group known as The Moon Unit, who, while completely open about what they do, need to stay in the shadows as they help well-known directors to write treatments [page 26].

We also motor ahead to the future of directing [page 77] as our news editor, Ryan Watson, speaks to the winning directors of the 2014 Porsche Awards, which took place at the end of last year and whose work you can see on this issue’s DVD and on our site.

Danny Edwards
Editor
@shotsmag_dan



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March 2015

News Inspiration Insight
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shots 155 front cover

The **Deutsch LA** posse were photographed for *shots* by Gary Land, with retouching by Trident Post Production. CCO and partner **Pete Lavat** talks to Simon Wakelin on page 48.



shots 155 contributors

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shots 156 / May 2015

In issue 156 of *shots* we crack out the cachaça as we head to **Brazil** to speak to some of the most prominent members of the Brazilian ad scene, including Alexandre Gama, the founder of Sao Paulo-based NEOGAMA/BBH and the worldwide chief creative officer of BBH Global.

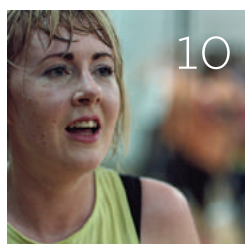
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Key to symbols

shots icons indicate whether the work written about in the magazine is either on *shots.net*, the *shots* DVD or both.



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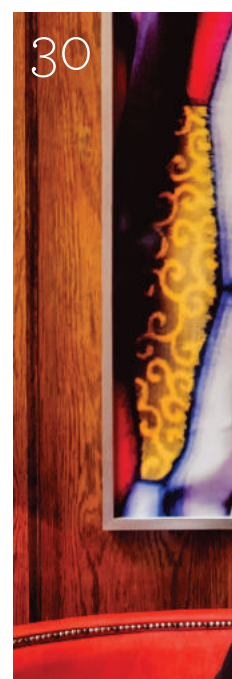
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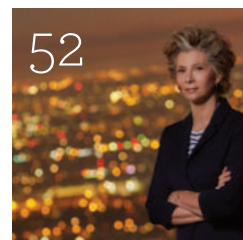
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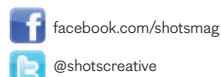
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Editorial material to be submitted to shots on DVD or emailed to spots@shots.net

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Many thanks to those companies that submitted material for consideration on *shots* 155. If your work didn't make it this time, please do not be discouraged from sending work in again. If you feel that your company has produced anything that would complement the Creative Showcase please let us know.

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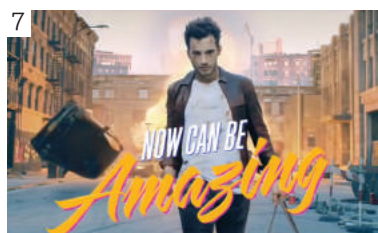
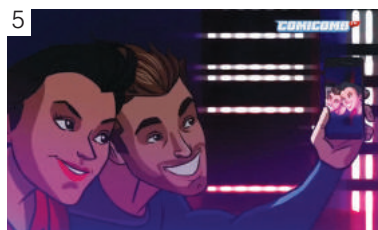
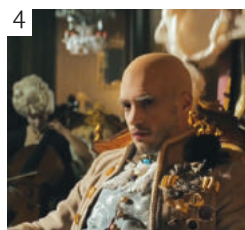
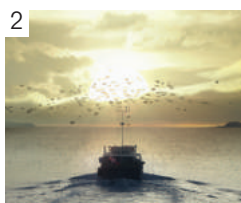
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On the trail of the T-shirt migration

TV & ONLINE


IKEA
The Joy Of Storage

Where do T-shirts go for the winter? You might say under your jumper. IKEA says they endlessly roam the globe looking for a comfortable, safe and, most importantly, stylish place to rest their weary short sleeves. And who are we to argue?

This new, beautifully realised campaign from Mother London, called *The Joy Of Storage*, sees a flock of T-shirts migrate from freezing cold climates across land and sea, through snow, wind and rain, to eventually end up perfectly folded and stylishly stored in one of IKEA's bedroom furniture units.

The ad manages to inject the T-shirts with an amazing amount of character, making them look like, variously, a flock of migrating geese, shivering penguins, gulls following a trawler out to sea, crows being chased from a farmer's field and murmuring starlings.

The spot is brilliantly directed by Blink London's Dougal Wilson with clever T-shirt puppetry by Jonny & Will from stablemate company Blinkink. It follows on the heels of last year's equally beautiful and similarly allegorical spot, *Beds*, which was directed by Juan Cabral. Both ads are part of IKEA's overarching *Wonderful Everyday* campaign strategy. **DE**

Hair today, gone tomorrow

TV & ONLINE


Lynx Hair
Less Effort, More Style

For some of us, this writer included, Lynx's new campaign message to "Make the most of your hair, while it's still there," has, sadly, come a little too late. But for the rest of you hirsute show-offs, BBH London's new 60-second ad continues to retarget the brand at a slightly more grown-up audience with slightly more sophisticated communication. This spot launches Lynx's range of hair styling and shampoo products and starts with a voiceover telling the man in the spot, and by extension us, that "You won't always look like you do now, one day

Get inspiration from the old-school skillz in this raft of new work: puppetry that turns T-shirts into living creatures; painting that reveals the true beauty of the beautiful game; and vinyl records that blend the physical and digital to promote the ancient art of turntablism



1/2/3 **IKEA**, *The Joy Of Storage*

4/5/6/7 **Lynx Hair**, *Less Effort, More Style*

8 **DJ QBert**, *Extraterrestria*

The record with its own decks

DESIGN/INTERACTIVE


DJ QBert
Extraterrestria

With vinyl sales in 2014 on the rise for the first time in 18 years (they passed the one million sales mark for the first time since 1996) more and more artists are looking for a unique way to stand out. Enter DJ QBert and his latest release, *Extraterrestria*, which invites music fans to play with a distinctive interactive album cover to accompany the record.

Created by UK company Novalia, a print technology firm that connects the digital world to the physical, the album sleeve acts as a MIDI controller which, when linked with DJ software company Algoriddim's djay app, allows users to mix and sample music using the cover.

Designed by artists Doug Cunningham and Jason Noto (aka Morning Breath), the interactive artwork features two decks, a cross fader and an array of SFX buttons. **TA**

your hair will thin," before showing us a variety of scenarios imagining our man as anything from an action star to a White House big-shot, and imploring us to go out and "see amazing things, get an amazing job, kiss the hottest girl, or the hottest boy" all, of course, with unimaginably good hairstyles. The stylish spot is directed by Biscuit Filmworks' Noam Murro. "We're enormously proud of this film," says Nick Gill, executive creative director of BBH London. "It's witty, exciting and full of filmic invention." **DE**

Cristiano Ronaldo wins the Ballon Draw

ONLINE


Copa90
Ballon Draw


After all the drama and excitement of FIFA's annual Ballon d'Or awards last month, we should now all be in agreement that Cristiano Ronaldo is not bad at that runny-jumpy-kicky-on-a-football-field lark.

To help celebrate Ronaldo's achievements, online football channel Copa90 turned to someone else who's no stranger to a football pitch: Hotspur & Argyle director Richard Swarbrick.

Swarbrick, the talent behind a string of brilliant animated films that capture memorable football matches and moments, was hired by Copa90 to come up with a unique tribute to Ronaldo's career. The resulting short is a typically brilliant animated piece.

Here, the director looks back on the project, touching on the brief, the tools and techniques he used to bring it to life and why he'll never get bored of painting the beautiful game.

What was the brief from Copa90?

The brief was to find a way to take my animation technique and give it a Copa90 twist. My animation style focusses purely on the footballing action, so we wanted to find a way to add broader themes such as culture, geography and football fandom in order to make a film that would be relevant to a Copa90 audience.



Tell us about the technique you opted for to create the piece?

How long did it take for you to put everything together?

I worked in close collaboration with the producer Tom Malion at Copa90, whom I approached with the initial concept. The idea I had was to paint the frames sequentially in various sketchbooks then photograph the drawings stop-motion style moving through the streets of Manchester and Madrid.

Tom devised a technique using a chest-mounted GoPro camera which

gave us a wide enough angle and allowed us to shoot video as well as stills.

It took about four weeks to paint the 1100 frames in 24 sketchpads and three days to shoot the film. The animation is rotoscoped from live-action footage and the paintings were created using biro, charcoal, pastel crayons, chalk, watercolour and Tipex.

How did you decide on the routes around the cities in the film?

Tom had a really good knowledge of the locations we used and he was able

to map out the route before we shot anything. He knew we needed to include as many landmarks from each city as possible, but most importantly the landmarks had to resonate with Ronaldo's fans. For example, in Madrid we filmed in Plaza de Cibeles, because this is where Real Madrid fans hold all their celebrations when they win something.

What was the biggest challenge on the project?

Apart from the Manchester weather? We spent a lot of time sheltering from the rain. The biggest challenge really was to get all the frames painted in time.

You've done a whole host of these animated films. Do you still enjoy each one as much as the first?

I'm a football obsessive, so I don't think I'll ever get bored of painting it. The fun part of any project for me is always the edit, but this film had the added element of the stop-motion shoot, which was great fun, and it was great to get out of the studio for once! **RW**

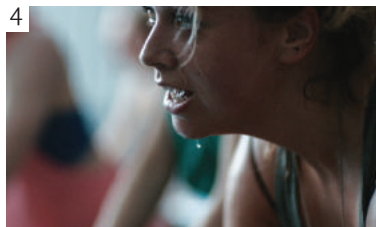
"The fun part of any project for me is always the edit but this film had the added element of the stop-motion shoot, which was great fun, and it was great to get out of the studio."





1/2/3/4/5 *Sport England, This Girl Can*

6/7/8/9/10 *Shredded Wheat, Northern Soul*



Real girl action to get girls going

TV, ONLINE & OUTDOOR



We're all used to seeing toned, athletic, zero-per-cent-body-fat men and women do their thing to advertise everything from sports apparel to soft drinks. We basically accept those images as the norm, which is maybe why the new campaign for Sport England, aimed specifically at women, has caused a stir. Created through FCB Inferno London the campaign includes a series of outdoor executions, a website and online films plus a 90-second spot directed by Somesuch London's Kim Gehrig. Called *This Girl Can* the campaign features women of varying ages, abilities and shapes taking on various sporting activities.

Set to Missy Elliott's *Get Ur Freak On* the spot shows women running, swimming, boxing and playing football and revels in the normality of such things. With lines like, 'I kick balls. Deal with it', and 'Sweating like a pig. Feeling like a fox', it's like an aspirational Nike-style spot set in the real world. "The first meeting I had with the agency and client was really memorable," explains Gehrig. "They said they wanted something 'disruptive' and 'behaviour-changing'. It was the best brief I'd ever been given."

Asked if it was the approach of showing women being sporty in a real-world way

which appealed to her, Gehrig says, "We discussed casting at length and how we could create something that women could relate to but also aspire to. As soon as we started street casting we knew finding 'real' women with their own relationships to sport was the way to go."

The campaign has been praised for its portrayal of normal women doing normal sporting activities. Gehrig says "It was something we had hoped for, but I'm very grateful it has made an impact. I hope it inspires women to be active and make sport a part of their lives, not just for fitness and weight loss reasons but for how it makes them feel." **DE**

"Interspersed with lines such as, 'I kick balls. Deal with it', and 'Sweating like a pig. Feeling like a fox', it's like an aspirational Nike spot set in the real world."

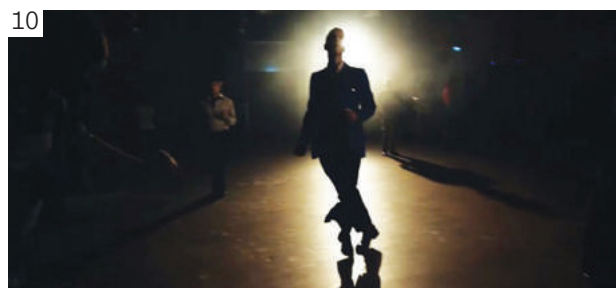
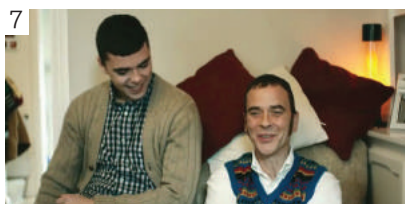
A morning bowl of Northern Soul

TV & ONLINE



Shredded Wheat
Northern Soul

Think of a breakfast cereal ad and the chances are you'll envision ice-cold milk being poured (probably in slo-mo) onto a bowl full of tasty-looking goodness. If it's a 'healthy' cereal, there's usually a fairly unsubtle reference to its medical benefits and someone will inevitably dive into a pool at the end. Well, McCann London has eschewed such clichés for its new Shredded Wheat campaign by creating a documentary-style film that shows us Dave and his renewed love of Northern Soul music. In the two-minute film, directed by Knucklehead's Finn McGough, Dave explains his love for the music, for dancing and why it's reignited his passion for life. We see him dressing in his finest Northern Soul fashion, dancing in a club and discussing his and his son Dan's mutual love of the scene. "The idea," explains McGough, "was to find someone who'd had to sideline a passion in life, perhaps because of work or family commitments, but at age 50-plus was able to rediscover it and 'follow their heart'. Initially the idea was that we'd film their reintroduction or discovery of this pursuit but that started to feel a little bit of a contrivance. Dave rediscovered the scene before we got to him but it's still wholly honest and on-brief. I think [the different approach to the campaign] was what attracted everyone attached to it. I didn't realise that Shredded Wheat appeals mostly to an older market so it actually makes sense to talk straight, for the aspiration to be achievable – the people we cast are fit and active and great examples of why that matters." Dave, says McGough, immediately stood out as someone who could carry the campaign and though the father/son element wasn't something they initially looked for, "[Dan] acts as a mirror reflecting back Dave's incredible lust for life." **DE**





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GOING GLOBAL

NEW ZEALAND

Dumb ways to drive

TV & ONLINE



New Zealand Transport Agency
Local Legends

We've all been there. You sort of want to say something but you're not sure it's your place. Should you tell someone their flies are undone? Should you mention that they've got a huge booger hanging out of their nose? Or that they have a piece of small, but increasingly noticeable lettuce wedged between their two front teeth? That's the premise for Clemenger BBDO Wellington's newest addition to their continually clever and thought-provoking New Zealand Transport Agency campaigns, although the stakes in this commercial are considerably higher.

The spot sees two elderly gents, Barry and Kev, discussing whether they should intervene when they spot a group of young men coming out of a bar and making their way to a car to drive home. "We should say something," states Barry. "Nah, I'm crap at that kind of thing," replies Kev. "But if we don't say something..." concludes Barry. Kev then approaches the group and delivers a sweet and ultimately persuasive speech about not driving home drunk in which he comments that their "fates are aligned" now that they've spoken and that the lads have Kev's "balls in your hands". The spot is beautifully directed by Finch Sydney's Patrick Hughes, who recently helmed the action movie *The Expendables 3* [insert your own joke about working with the elderly here]. **DE**



US

A pretense of pretentiousness

ONLINE



Moto 360
Watch For Our Times

Pretentious voiceover? Check. Stylish, black-and-white camera work? Check. Attractive people doing mundane things in an uncannily attractive way? Check. This campaign from Droga5 New York and Believe Media director Floria Sigismondi has all the hallmarks of the sort of campaign we at *shots* usually avoid. But this being Droga5, there's got to be a twist, right?

Right. The agency has put a contemporary spin on luxury watch advertising clichés by lampooning those particular types of commercials for the new smart watch, the Motorola Moto 360. So, we have a golfer practising his impressive swing; a pianist dramatically tickling the ivories; a businessman penning an important letter; a glamorous woman preening herself and a model-like couple getting frisky. All accompanied by a cheesy voiceover breathlessly intoning words like 'connection', 'elegance' and 'artistry', before a subtle buzz can be heard and the watch lights up with a social media message that completely breaks the mood – a Facebook request from Mom; an emoticon-laden text from a drunken pal.

It's a witty and unusual approach for a product that obviously sees itself as a luxury item but doesn't want to be seen taking itself too seriously. **DE**

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THE
WHAT WAS
THAT NOISE?



NETHERLANDS

The year that was. Wasn't it?

TV & ONLINE



Alzheimer Nederland
Year In Review

When the end of the year rolls around, we all get nostalgic by watching a whole series of year-in-review videos, usually put out by various news and entertainment channels or sites. It's a natural human inclination to want to look back on what happened or what was achieved as a year draws to a close and it's a device that the Dutch charity Alzheimer Nederland used cleverly and effectively at the end of 2014. Created by agency N=5 the 80-second spot starts with a cursor typing the line "2014 was a year of..." before you're then launched into a collection of news stories outlining the previous 365 days. It starts with the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton which... wow! That seemed like ages ago... before moving on to the inauguration of Pope Francis which was in... hang on... next up is the devastation of Hurricane Katrina... wait, that's not right.

The spot continues in this vein, serving up stories on the Challenger space shuttle disaster, the deaths of Steve Jobs and Amy Winehouse, and Halle Berry winning an Oscar. A whole raft of famous events are shown, each of which leave you with a feeling that something's not quite right, before the end line appears: "You are now experiencing what it's like to have Alzheimer's disease." It's a deceptively simple but devastatingly effective device which, for a few seconds, puts you in the same position as someone with the disease. **DE**





SOUTH AFRICA

Do you have time to watch this?

TV & ONLINE

Dialdirect
The Notebook

When South African insurance company Dialdirect wanted to give its brand positioning an overhaul, with a promise to offer its customers “insurance made easy”, they turned to Johannesburg agency Joe Public and Velocity director Greg Gray to help create a commercial which would perfectly encapsulate that ethos. What they came up with was an emotional 130-second TV commercial called *The Notebook*. It follows a young boy called Noah who realises his mum has very little spare time and sets about trying to help her. He does the washing up, takes the dog for a walk, attempts the ironing and tidies his room unbidden, all the while using a notebook to jot down the amount of time he has saved his mum by doing those jobs himself. The boy’s help isn’t completely altruistic, as we soon find out – with the time saved, he hopes his mum can come to see him in his school play.

“As an agency, we are in the business of growing our clients’ business. We feel that the concept we have created in this spot is an emotional and touching story that everyone can relate to in our fast-paced world, where time has become a precious commodity.

“We worked with exceptional partners to craft and create a story that positions Dialdirect as a courageous, customer-conscious brand,” explains Pepe Marais, chief creative officer at Joe Public. **DE**

THAILAND

We do need another hero

TV & ONLINE

Thai Life Insurance
Garbage Man

When it comes to playing your heartstrings with the skill and dexterity of a Royal Philharmonic Orchestra harpist, Thai Life Insurance is second to none. In 2014 the brand and its agency, Ogilvy & Mather Bangkok, brought us a three-minute spot called *Unsung Hero* which followed the altruistic endeavours of a young man who simply wanted to help people and, by doing so, ultimately helps himself. The start of 2015 sees the company follow a similarly emotional story, this time featuring a young boy called Pornchai Sukyod. When his class is asked by their schoolteacher to imagine themselves as a superhero, Pornchai doesn’t follow the route of his classmates, who opt for characters such as Magnet Man or Thunderbolt, but instead creates the, at first glance rather more prosaic, Garbage Man. We soon find out that Pornchai’s mother is a road sweeper but that, after a recent car accident, is less physically able to do her job than before, so her young son tries to help her as much as he can, and Garbage Man is a selfless creation, with powers and tools that help him to help her by doing her job more effectively. The spot is beautifully directed and will again force you to explain to everyone that, yes, you just have something in your eye. **DE**

INDIA

Giant steps against disease

TV & ONLINE

Sabin Vaccine Institute
Giant Footprints

India was certified polio-free in 2014, but now the country has the opportunity to achieve its next public health victory with the elimination of lymphatic filariasis, a disease that threatens nearly half of the country’s population. To meet this goal, the Indian Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has launched one of the largest public health campaigns in India’s history to provide more than 400 million people with free medication that could protect them from lymphatic filariasis, a disease also called filaria or elephantiasis, which can cause horrible disability and disfigurement among those infected.

To raise awareness of the disease, as well as the simplicity of its prevention, help was sought from Ogilvy & Mather Mumbai to create a nationwide campaign, the result being a two-minute spot called *Giant Footprints*.

The spot follows the story of a group of young boys who find outsized footprints in the dirt and begin to follow them. They are soon joined by a whole host of other people, intrigued at what made the marks, before it’s revealed that a sufferer of filaria purposely made them to lure the village’s inhabitants to the vaccine centre. “We were immediately drawn to the idea of eliminating filaria in India,” says Sumanto Chattopadhyay, ECD, South Asia, Ogilvy Mumbai. “The theme of working together to wipe away this terrible disease became an early cornerstone of our creative direction and from there we built other important elements into our concepts, including intrigue and an uplifting, simple message that would stick with our target audience.” **DE**



It’s an heroic, life-saving round-up of global spots this issue. We’ve got cute kids helping mums, cute old men saving lives and moving campaigns to prevent and cure devastating diseases

Getting creative with technological advances

OPINION

Ben Jones

Ben Jones, chief technology officer at AKQA, looks forward to a year of converging tech and creativity, a more emotional technological landscape and a marketplace feeding off cognitive behavioural science. But the big question is: will 2015 be the year we all finally get hoverboards?

Before we touch on the year ahead, what in the world of technology and its applications in advertising impressed you last year?

The word 'hallelujah' comes to mind for 2014. It's finally sunk in that technology is the magic, while creativity is the magician, and one doesn't happen without the other. The divide between them is often seen in campaigns, products and services, and these disparities result in compromise, which often makes the end result feel clunky. Technology should add to the experience by taking away the friction. 2014 was the year when advertising rarely sat on its own. Just look at what John Lewis did with *Monty The Penguin*. It was an ad and an experience, and it came with an app. Technology, for many, used to be something added on. Now you can see it's more often at the heart from the start.

Last year AKQA worked on one of the most impressive tech-based campaigns of 2014 with Nike's *House Of Mamba* LED court. Was that something that could only have been achieved with recent technological advances?

As with all technology, there's a limit as to what it can do. The secret is not to accept the limitation but to find ways to overcome what may seem impossible.

With the Nike *RISE House Of Mamba* project the technologies were there, but it was how we brought them together that was the clever part. RFID, infrared cameras, interactive LED, all played a part. But it was the way that they communicated with each other that made it slick. Then we added theatre.



"I believe the one thing we will see this year is the return of emotion. Emotion has been nascent in so many digital executions purely due to the distance between the consumer and the brand and as a result of the internet – at once connecting and separating us."

Advancements in technology should feel like magic. If there is a limitation, it should still feel like magic. That's the result of cohesion and collaboration between techies and creatives. *House Of Mamba* nailed both.

Those tech advances have been happening at such a ferocious pace in the last few years. Will technology be able to keep evolving at the same speed?

A deep question – the answer could be the result of the technology evolution itself. We are getting closer to artificial intelligence and this could be the key to accelerating change. Code will be able to create better code, which will be able to create better, faster things. I'd personally want to move to a desert island, but the AI revolution could happen. Technology only ever gets faster.

What technology do you see as being important or disruptive to the advertising community over the course of this year?

A year is hard to predict, as it often takes time for so-called trends to take hold. If you look at the devices rapidly surrounding us, you can start to piece the future together by the opportunities that they offer.

NFC [near field communication, which allows smartphones and other devices to establish radio communication with each other] is currently integrated into so many devices and is going to offer multiple routes to a brand. Location-aware experiences are finally going to deliver on the original promises of location-based services.

You really can't leave out Apple HealthKit and Google Fit either. Both connect into the wearable world we've lived through in 2013-14, which disappointed the majority. As we harness the data collectively, the disruptive ideas start to flow. Cognitive behavioural science can be applied to creative thinking and we should start to have a lot of fun with that. Then of course there's the Hendo Hoverboard. Surely that must be integrated into everything everyone does throughout this year? Who said you can't predict the future? *Back To The Future Part II* predicted it perfectly – even the year was spot on.

Is near field communication something which could become prevalent in 2015?

NFC is becoming more integrated into everything we do. Through 2014 we saw

the London Underground innovate again by allowing us to travel on the Tube by touching our contactless payment cards to readers. But seismic shifts require a bigger pivotal moment – something that comes along and makes the application of a specific technology obvious, and makes you question why it didn't exist before. A moment that makes a once siloed technology accessible, elegant and human.

Enter the Apple Watch. Just like the introduction of the iPhone, the Apple Watch will house technologies that have been here for many years. Apple do something unique when launching their products: the technology superbrand offers an ecosystem that technology providers, the largest brands in the world, and most importantly, the consumer, all want to be part of.

How important – or more important – will smartphones become in the following year?

Smartphones are simply phones. Let's drop the word 'smart'. In fact, let's drop the word 'phone' while we're at it. Phones aren't really phones anymore. Someone needs to come up with a new name for these machines, computers, connectors to the web. They are consoles, wallets, thermometers, training companions and televisions. They are portals to the things we need. In the coming year, digital channels will go crazy. Phones (portals) are a very big part of that. Apple Watch or no Apple Watch.

So what's your prediction for the year ahead...?

I believe the one thing we will see this year is the return of emotion. Emotion has been nascent in so many digital executions purely due to the distance between the consumer and the brand and as a result of the internet – at once connecting and separating us.

But the ecosystem around us gets richer each day. Inputs like our vital signs, facial expressions, digital DNA and user profiling will allow experiences to be tailored. Initiatives like 23andMe – the genetic kit for ancestry, which holds your actual DNA – allow the ecosystem to respond to your reactions. We will see a two-way conversation in return, one that is more measured and adaptive to who we are and how we feel than ever before. **S**

The full version of this interview can be found on shots.net, where Jones will be a monthly contributor on the worlds of creativity and technology through 2015

There is an
Angel behind you!



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Film Production & Post Production Co.

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ANDRÉ'S ANTI-HEROES



Independent Films director *Philippe André*, has helmed spots for top brands from Orange to Guinness and stormed festivals in 2013 with his very French short *Delicate Gravity*. He is transported by Glenn Gould playing Bach, needs a 40-hour day and finds TV's anti-heroes heroic

What is the most creative advertising idea you've seen in the last few months?

I Love the Honda online spot *The Other Side*; it is a great idea to have two versions playing on two digital channels at the same time. Also, IKEA *Beds*, Lynx *Soulmates* and First Direct *Little Frill*. Leica *100* is so beautiful. The New Zealand Transport Agency's *Mistakes* is stunning.

What's your favourite website?

I love [lensculture.com](#); it's a great resource for photographers, artists, publishers and curators who want to find out about contemporary photography. [Medium.com](#) is great, too, it's where people share stories. It's simple and collaborative.

What website do you use most regularly?

Le Monde online for the news then during the day Google and WeTransfer and I listen to Spotify.

What product could you not live without?

In any order: my laptop, phone and a coffee machine.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life/job better?

Is it a pill, an implant or a plug-in? I don't know. Something to enable me to fit 40 hours in one day. Would be good to work, to find time to relax and to think, to see my family, my friends, to go to the movies, theatre or opera more often, to fit everything into one day. The other option, of course, is to live a lot longer.

What track/artist would you listen to for inspiration?

Glenn Gould playing Bach, because it's perfection. He recorded the same pieces again and again throughout his life. When NASA sent Voyager into space in 1977, they made *The Golden Record* with music and sounds from Earth, to show what are the treasures of humanity in case extra terrestrials would find it. Glenn Gould playing Bach is on it.

What's the best film you've seen over the last year?

Mommy directed by Xavier Dolan is a wonderful film. It won a Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival last year and is a superb love story about a widowed woman overwhelmed by the difficulty of raising her violent son as a single parent. It was shot in 1.1 ratio, a square framing, to enhance the characters' feeling of oppression. When there is a bit of freedom, the frame becomes 2.35 – wider. Breathtaking.

If you could live in one city, where would it be?

I love Paris but I prefer not to live in just one city. I love London a lot. Maybe New York would be a place I'd love to try and live in. As I travel for shoots I generally always end up in the same 10 or 15 cities around the globe. I love the feeling of discovering a city again and again; it's as if I know the place but also I don't know it all. Sometimes I feel like a goldfish in a tank with a 10-second memory. I see the world for the first time every time I go round, it's weird.

What show/exhibition has most inspired you recently?

An amazing show in a former jail, Sainte-Anne Prison in Avignon, France. The prison was built at the end of the 18th century and closed in 2003. The exhibition was called *The Disappearance Of The Fireflies*, after an essay published in 1975 by Pier Paolo Pasolini. The show explored themes like time, love, solitude and, naturally, imprisonment. And the works were scattered throughout the cells, corridors and courtyards. The installation *Girl With Globe* by Kiki Smith was particularly striking – the small body of a child frozen in motion, perched on a ledge in a high and narrow cell with a large sphere hanging above her head.

Mac or PC?

When engineers created the first computer, they got it wrong and used the initials for Pretty Crap. Then they created Mac...

"I love anti-heroes. They are more ordinary and thus heroic. Human, like us. When they are good, they are never pure, but when they are evil, they have noble intentions."

What fictitious character do you most relate to?

I love anti-heroes. They are more ordinary and thus heroic. Human, like us. When they are good, they are never pure, but when they are evil, they have noble intentions. They are never black or white. They are why TV shows are so good right now – Jimmy McNulty in *The Wire*, Walter White in *Breaking Bad*, Jaime Lannister from *Game Of Thrones* or Rustin Cohle in *True Detective* – anti-heroes are everywhere.

What's your favourite magazine?

Le Film Français, which is a kind of *Hollywood Reporter* but... smaller... and French. OK, don't laugh.


Who's your favourite photographer?

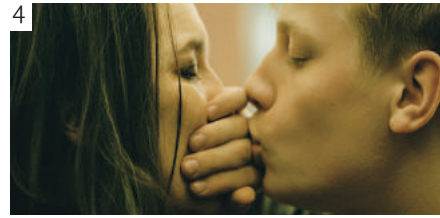
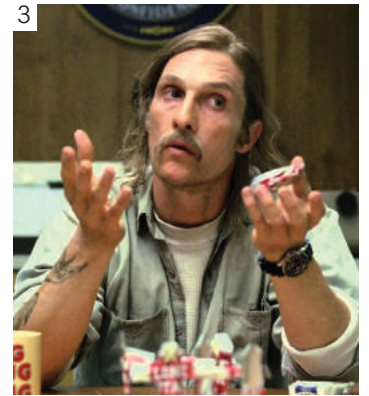
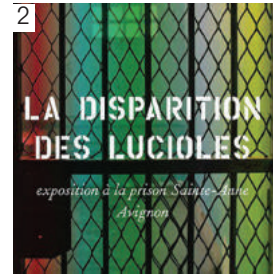
Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Who's your favourite designer?

Ron Arad [architect and product designer]. I love his radical approach to design. Years ago when I was working for the National Museum of Modern Art in the Centre Pompidou, Paris, I interviewed him. He explained why we had to destroy old and boring furniture around to give space to create new stuff. He had this kind of punk approach and now he builds amazing pieces. And I also love [engineer, designer and architect] Jean Prouvé a lot.

If you could have been in any band, what band would you choose?

The Velvet Underground. It's so modern. Or King Crimson. Because it's a bridge to the contemporary music I love. I called a movie I'm developing *Starless* in homage to King Crimson. 



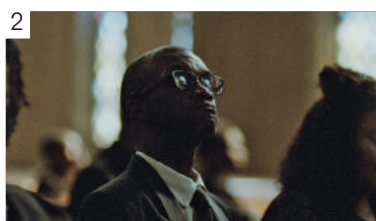
What inspires André:
 1 Pianist Glenn Gould
 2 Disappearance Of The Fireflies
 3 Rustin Cohle
 4 The film Mommy
 5 Girl With Globe, by Kiki Smith
 6 King Crimson
 7 Architect and designer Ron Arad



HIRO MURAI



While most directors are concerned with what is placed *in* the scene, Hiro Murai is fascinated by the ‘mystery of what is not being seen’, of what could be lurking in shadows. Consequently, the work of the Tokyo-born, LA-based director, – who’s won plaudits for his promos for artists such as David Guetta and Queens Of The Stone Age – often leans toward darkness, and not just metaphorically; last year he was flat out with back-to-back night shoots. *David Knight* asks him to shed a little light on the matter

1 Chet Faker, *Gold*2 Flying Lotus, *Never Catch Me*3 Earl Sweatshirt, *Hive*4 St Vincent, *Cheerleader*

Hiro Murai can clearly deal with most things that are thrown his way, however, he says there was a point last year when it nearly all became a bit too much. Last summer, he and his production team were on a continuous run of back-to-back music video and commercial projects (“We never thought it was going to end, because things kept cropping up,”) when Steven Ellison, aka electronic musician Flying Lotus, contacted Murai to invite him to script the first video from his new album, *You’re Dead*.

Even though Flying Lotus is renowned for making highly creative music videos, Murai was exhausted and hesitated. “I just couldn’t wrap my head around another video,” he says. But Ellison persisted: he wanted to ditch the usual music video pitching process and work together with Murai on an idea. “I wrote that one with him standing behind me, basically.”

The resulting promo for *Never Catch Me* simply bears out why ‘FlyLo’ was determined to work with Murai. It turned out to be a standout moment in a year of high achievement. Poetic and poignant, the director conjures a joyful ending out of pure tragedy: two young African-American victims of gun violence come back to life, and then escape from their own funeral service, dancing past oblivious mourners before making their getaway in a hearse.

“The album is about death, and [Ellison] was very aware of the violence happening in Chicago – happening everywhere,” Murai reveals. “His original idea was a Tom Sawyer situation, with a boy attending his own funeral. With that, something clicked. I expanded on that, and it became a choreographed piece.”

It was a very good year

Together with exceptional videos for the likes of comedian-turned-hip-hop star Childish Gambino, veteran rockers Queens Of The Stone Age, Australian soulster Chet Faker and indie darlings Spoon, the Flying Lotus video sealed Murai’s position as one of the world’s top music video directors. And his triumphant year was crowned

by winning the prestigious Best Director prize at the UK Music Video Awards last November.

And there were commercials too: a series of doc-style ads featuring musicians Rodrigo y Gabriela, Kimbra, Steve Jones and Carlos Niño demonstrating the Sonos music system; plus spots for Lincoln Black Label and Google.

“Pretty chaotic” is how Murai himself, on the phone from Los Angeles, summarises 2014. “At the beginning of the year we did two videos back-to-back, which meant four days of night shoots. That seemed ludicrous at the time, but then we quickly topped that.” He says he was bouncing between videos and commercials from then on.

The year clearly involved a lot of night shooting, as Murai’s recent work has highlighted his most distinctive stylistic traits: deadpan humour, unhurried pacing, and darkness. In the first of several videos for Childish Gambino, the minimalist, darkly comic promo for 3005, Murai placed Donald Glover (aka Gambino) on a ferris wheel at night with a loveable teddy bear getting progressively battered by an unseen hand. He then followed up with the video for Gambino’s *Sweatpants*, with the artist finding himself in a dreamlike loop, repeatedly walking through a diner at night, finding the patrons increasingly replaced by clones of himself.

His video for Queens Of The Stone Age’s *Smooth Sailing* chronicles a wild night out by a group of sake-blitzed Japanese businessmen and their Anglo colleague – played by band frontman Josh Homme – that ends very badly indeed. And for Chet Faker’s *Gold*, Murai created a simple, near-one-shot dance sequence with a difference: it’s performed by three girls on rollerskates on a desert highway at night.

“Me and [DP and regular collaborator] Larkin Seiple have shot a lot at night at this point,” Murai agrees. “I think we both have an interest in being able to sculpt what we want to see out of a scene. There’s a sort of mystery in what is not being seen, and that adds atmosphere to what we are seeing.”

That interplay between physical darkness and light is not the only visual motif to be found

in Murai’s work. There’s also his subtle use of visual effects, and his darkly humorous take on destruction and disaster – both evident in last year’s video for Spoon’s *Do You*, where frontman Britt Daniel drives through LA as the city is being destroyed by unknown forces, revealed at the end to be giant toddlers.

But even within his relatively short career, Murai has already managed to undergo a certain degree of reinvention – the result of having become a music video director almost by accident.

An early pioneer of viral videos

Murai was born in Tokyo, but his parents moved to the US when he was a child (despite his longtime American residency he remains a Japanese national). From high school in LA, he went on to study film at the University of Southern California, where he immersed himself in narrative filmmaking. A career in film and TV was the obvious target. But when he graduated, he found himself gravitating towards music videos.

“It was the first job I got paid for doing,” he says, “But the whole scene also felt very exciting to me because I was a little burned out by film school. There was something refreshing and intuitive about music videos, where I felt you really could just play.” Murai describes his first job in promos as “cinematographer in quotation marks – I really didn’t know what I was doing”. And he could also turn his hand to visual effects and drawing storyboards – “anything to stop me from working in an office,” he says.

He soon decided he was better suited to being a director than a DP, and Partizan, where he was doing a lot of work, offered him his first micro-budgeted promos to direct. The quality of his ideas and execution immediately shone through. The 2009 video for The Fray’s cover of Kanye West’s *Heartless*, combines live action with the 2D animation of a boy’s schoolbook doodles. In the same year, for an Armand Van Helden remix of Bloc Party’s *Signs*, he grafted recording equipment onto human bodies, and then moved beyond this brand of Chris Cunningham-style body horror –

“...the whole scene also felt very exciting to me because I was a little burned out by film school. There was something refreshing...”

in one audacious, Dali-esque shot. “It was at a time when the word ‘viral’ was getting thrown around a lot – but no one really knew what that meant,” says Murai. After his initial treatment, the label wanted to go more extreme, so he suggested replacing female genitalia with a singing mouth. “I pitched the idea thinking there was no way they would say ‘yes’ to that – but they did.”

He officially signed to Partizan, and was soon scripting on tracks by big-name pop and hip-hop artists, which then translated into videos for the likes of Usher, Enrique Iglesias, Lupe Fiasco and B.o.B. Having not previously considered becoming a music video director, this seemed like the logical career progression, even though he had little interest in making mainstream pop videos before this point. “My main thing was just being able to make things – that was most important to me,” he says. “But part of me did have this morbid curiosity about being in that position. To be making an Usher video felt like a very bizarre, cosmic joke.” This work also proved hugely popular – his video for B.o.B’s *Airplanes*, for example, accumulated well over 100 million YouTube views by the end of 2010 – but they were also projects where his creative stamp could get lost. “I experienced a lot of things that I didn’t expect,” he reflects. “Not only are you creatively constrained on bigger videos, there’s more politics involved. At a certain point it occurred to me that I wasn’t getting the same sort of joy out of it.”

Murai started making different choices, “I began to pursue artists that I felt I could do something interesting with,” and the breakthrough came at the start of 2012, with his video for alternative artist St. Vincent’s *Cheerleader*. Set in an art gallery, Annie Clark (aka St. Vincent) appears as the exhibit – a giant among Lilliputian spectators, who crumbles to pieces as she attempts to escape her confinement. “The budget was small, but there’s something very liberating about doing a ten-thousand-dollar video,” he says. “I got to sort of sculpt it as we went, and it was almost too little money for the label to ask for any changes.” And as well as revisiting the



...and intuitive about music videos, where I felt you really could just play.”

“The budget was small, but there’s something very liberating about doing a ten-thousand-dollar video. I got to sort of sculpt it as we went...

relative-size visual motif in several videos since then, relative conceptual simplicity has also increasingly become his hallmark.

While flipping between lower budget conceptual videos for Friends, Scissor Sisters and The Shins, and one bigger-budget narrative video with VFX for David Guetta ft. Sia’s *She Wolf (Falling To Pieces)*, which has racked up nearly 300 million views on YouTube – and moving to a new production company home, Domsday Entertainment – he made another important connection in late 2012 with rapper and Odd Future collective member Earl Sweatshirt.

In the two ensuing Sweatshirt videos for *Chum* and *Hive*, Murai crystallised his current measured style. “The first Earl video definitely felt like something clicked in my head,” he says. “I always struggled because I like slow and deliberate filmmaking, but music videos don’t necessarily support that.” But Earl showed him a one-shot video he liked, for young British artist King Krule. “Barely anything happened in it. So that gave me permission to exploit that side of things.”

Murai agrees that the videos for *Chum* and *Hive* – dark, minimal yet subtly surreal – set the scene for when he was introduced to Donald Glover (aka Childish Gambino) at the Grammys in early 2013, where Murai was working on visuals for Frank Ocean’s live performance. A few months later Glover invited Murai to direct a short film he scripted, *Clapping For The Wrong Reasons*. When the Childish Gambino album *Because The Internet* was released, Murai started to make the videos, starting with the fairground-shot clip for 3005, which was filmed with a remote-controlled camera on a real ferris wheel.

Octopi and dances in a diner

More Childish Gambino videos have followed, and Murai says: “I think it’s a unique thing working with Donald. Often I don’t even write a treatment, which is pretty rare. For *Sweatpants* he wanted to do something with repetition, and I wanted to do something with doubles; it became a combination of the two. But it hung around for quite a long time until he called me up and said, ‘Let’s do that diner idea.’”

Later in the year Murai and Glover went to Hawaii to shoot the video for *Telegraph Ave*, a love story with a twist in which Gambino’s true identity is exposed – under his human skin he is a murderous octopus-like alien. “Donald pretty much had the whole idea ready when he approached me about it – apart from the ending. That video is basically 85 per cent as he

Hiro Murai is inspired by...

What is your favourite music video?

It’s probably a tie between Pharcyde’s *Drop* directed by Spike Jonze and Jonathan Glazer’s video for Radiohead’s *Street Spirit*. Both of these are archetypes of modern promos and do what’s unique to music videos really well.

What product could you not live without?

Moleskine notebooks. I have piles and piles of notebooks and they’re filled with everything from dumb doodles to shot lists and storyboards. Mostly dumb doodles.

What are your thoughts on social media?

It’s amazing and depressing at the same time.

How do you relieve stress during a shoot?

We joke around and stress eat. Our sets are generally pretty laid back, though.

What’s the last film you watched and was it any good?

I watched *Inherent Vice* [2014 comedy crime drama directed by Paul Thomas Anderson] and I really liked it, although it seems that a lot of my friends hated it.

What film do you think everyone should’ve seen?

Robert Altman’s *The Long Goodbye* [1973].

What was the last gig you went to?

I think it was [US indie rock band] Neutral Milk Hotel at the Hollywood Bowl. It was a bizarre venue for that band but a really good show.

If you weren’t doing the job you do now, what job would you like to do?

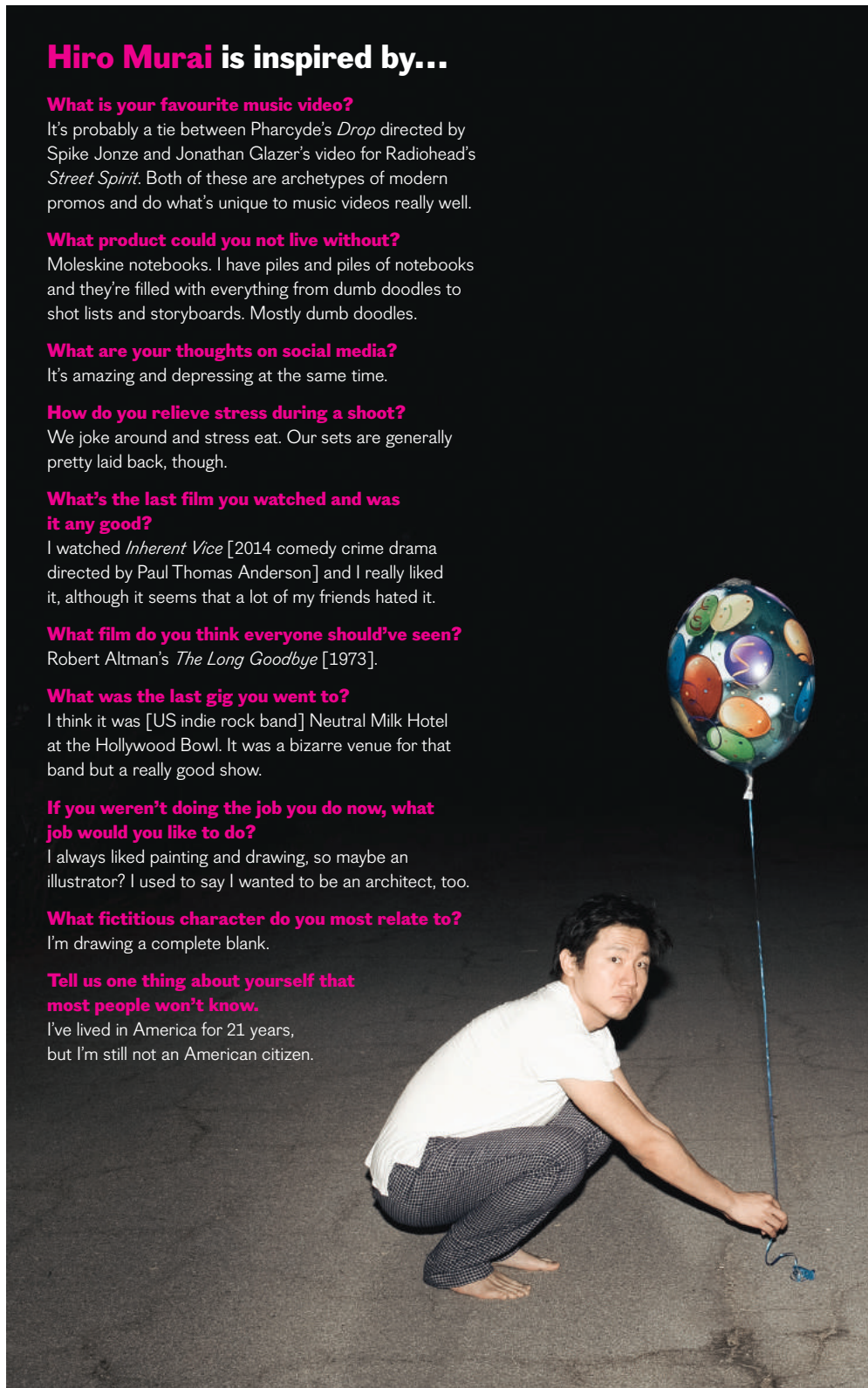
I always liked painting and drawing, so maybe an illustrator? I used to say I wanted to be an architect, too.

What fictitious character do you most relate to?

I’m drawing a complete blank.

Tell us one thing about yourself that most people won’t know.

I’ve lived in America for 21 years, but I’m still not an American citizen.



...and it was almost too little money for the label to ask for any changes.”

“[Josh Homme] just wanted to be right in the middle of it – and it turns out he’s a really great actor, which was an amazing surprise...”


presented it and I added that bit at the end.” Most recently, for Glover’s track *Sober*, made at the end of 2014, and released early in the new year, the pair have returned to an LA diner at night and created a whimsically romantic two-hander, in which an inebriated Gambino pleads with a girl to take him back. If *Sober* and the dramatic denouement of *Telegraph Ave* suggest that Murai is edging back towards his first passion for narrative filmmaking, his Queens Of The Stone Age video, which came out of a more conventional music video scripting process, provides further evidence.

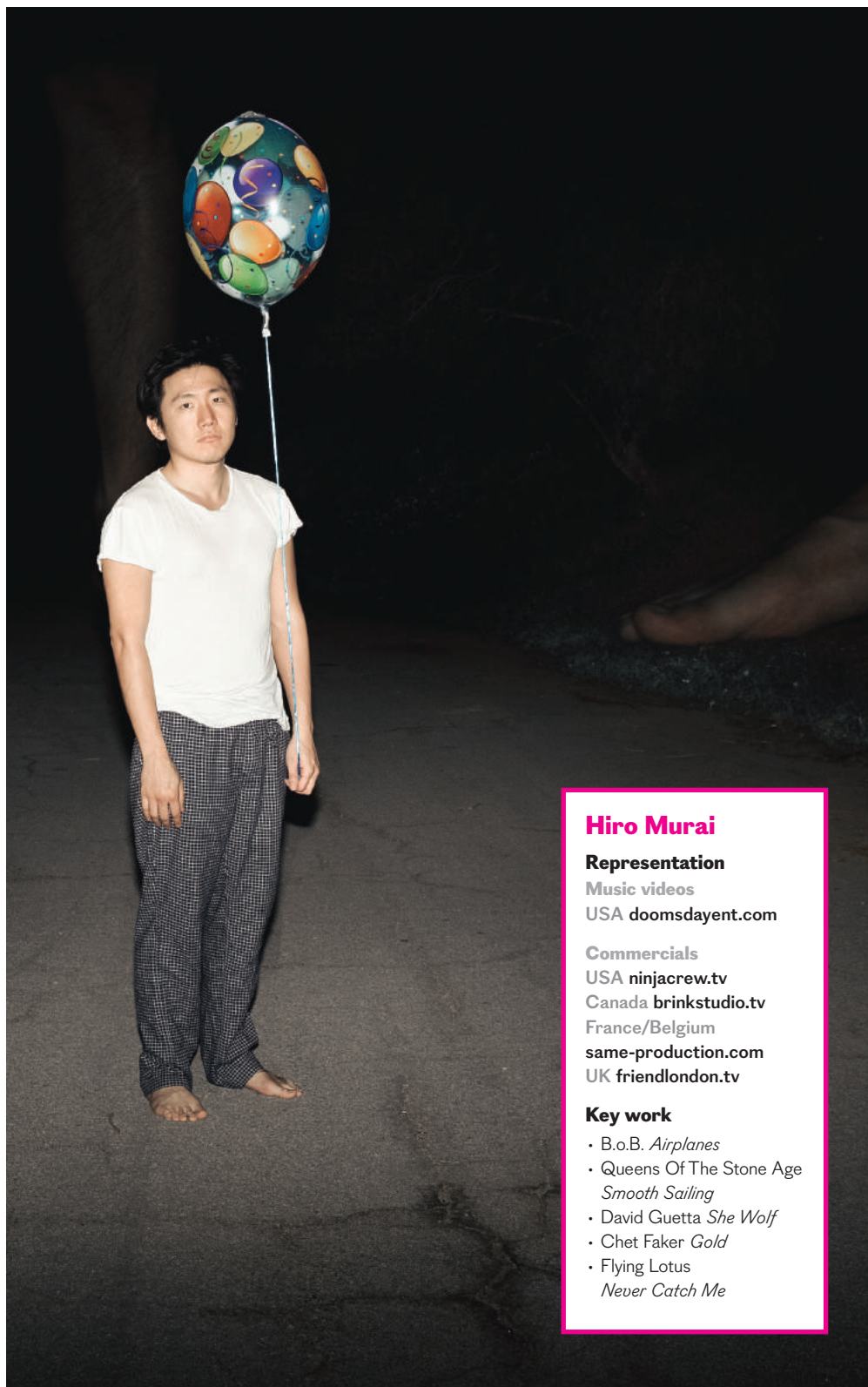
“I’d pitched them two different ideas, just because I thought the Japanese businessmen idea was too ridiculous for them.” But Josh Homme loved it. “He just wanted to be right in the middle of it – and it turns out he’s a really great actor, which was an amazing surprise. Most of the time you point a camera at a musician and they don’t know what to do.”

Ryan’s real rollerskating

He confirms that his long-term objective is to work in longform narrative filmmaking, but the shortform will remain his focus for a while longer – especially as he increasingly appears to pick and choose his music video projects. For example, for Chet Faker’s *Gold*, Murai approached the artist to see if he was interested in making a video for the track, selling the idea for a rollerskate dance routine in the desert at night. Once agreed, he worked on the project with top choreographer Ryan Heffington, who was the choreographer of Sia’s iconic *Chandelier* video.

“That was the first time we worked with Ryan, which was amazing,” recalls Murai. “It was really interesting to watch him work. During the shoot, we’re on a camera car, and Ryan is on the truck bed, basically, on the megaphone with the girls, doing the count.” And Murai also stresses that this was done for real, on a desert road, not against green screen, as some viewers believe. “I’ve been asked that a lot, and every time I hear that I think of how much work that would be. It wouldn’t make anything easier!” he laughs.

Furthermore, Murai says his productive collaborations with musicians such as Chet Faker, Flying Lotus and Childish Gambino have been about more than mutual trust. It is about their attitude to the end product. Gambino, for example, “likes to make content for the sake of making content,” he says. “Yes, the video is promotional material, but it’s also about understanding that it can be something more special than that – a self-contained piece of work.” 



Hiro Murai

Representation

Music videos

USA doomsdayent.com

Commercials

USA ninjacrew.tv

Canada brinkstudio.tv

France/Belgium

same-production.com

UK friendlondon.tv

Key work

- B.o.B. *Airplanes*
- Queens Of The Stone Age *Smooth Sailing*
- David Guetta *She Wolf*
- Chet Faker *Gold*
- Flying Lotus *Never Catch Me*

...most of the time you point a camera at a musician and they don’t know what to do.”



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THE OPPOSITE OF ADVERTISING

"It amuses me that I could walk down the street past several directors we've helped to nail jobs worth six, sometimes seven figures, yet they wouldn't recognise us."

The Moon Unit is a team of ghostwriters providing a round-the-clock, round-the-globe pitch/treatment writing service to the world's top commercials directors. *Carol Cooper* discovers the secret of their clandestine success

Standing out from the pack

In this sample pitch from The Moon Unit, the writer plays on the rough-as-guts tradition in New Zealand beer ads, giving it an ironic spin. The Moon Unit's client, a director with a great reputation for comic spots, got the job, and the resulting ad boosted the 'outsider' beer brand's market share.

"Far from the quiche-munching, cappuccino-swilling wankers of Grey Lynn lies a world of wide-open spaces where men are men – clearing gorse, lambing ewes, breaking in horses and tilling soil. The same today as it was 150 years ago.

This is the central Otago Highlands, home of the rugged Southern Man, with its exact geographical centre being a little town called (town is brand name).

This is a mythical New Zealand, beloved by all NZ males, where images of the South Island high country present a particular construction of masculine identity. Rugged, tough, macho, real warts-and-all characters that represent to the NZ identity what the Wild West did for the USA. Core values like loyalty, integrity, mate-ship and a "she'll be right" attitude that taps into a construct that all New Zealand men identify with.

And this territory has been owned by a rival brand that rhymes with 'crates'. For the last 23 years, in fact. Even though their product might taste like a combination of horse piss and rancid student's socks, twice distilled through a whore's knickers.

Let's face it. Beer is war. Dominated by different tribes.

You drink Heineken? You're a used-car salesman. Too young to get into a pub? You're drinking Ice Beer. Anoraks and train spotters? Rheineck. Gang members and bogans? Waikato – or Lion Red. Barefoot in the supermarket? You're drinking Double Brown.

If you go back in time, every town had its own brewery and you drank from that town. Times have moved on, but brands have come to represent certain values. Groups of friends often drink the same beer for a sense of belonging.

The Southern Man has become iconic – he's the man standing tall in the tussock-clad prairie that every New Zealand bloke really wants to be. Real men who don't fart around with fancy green bottles and designer beers. The brewers, the publicans, the students, the farmers of Otago. Pig-hunting bushmen with rampant mongrel pigdogs and bloodied boars slung over their shoulders. Men who want a real man's beer. Real beer that puts hairs on your balls. Superb drinkability that only increases when one owns a couple of slabs.

(Brand name) has the potential to be the challenger brand that can tap into this construct and reclaim some of its real estate, springboarding it into the popular consciousness by adding a further dimension to the tired, wooden stereotypes that the Southern Man has become.

By hijacking the wry humour and laidback pace of the 'good on ya' forebears, and injecting the cheeky vivacity of the brand from Mangatainoka. Right.

Any way you look at it, (brand name's) time has truly arrived..."



Look up the word 'advertising' in a thesaurus and you'll be richly rewarded with a tasty stash of such mouthwatering synonyms as 'hogwash', 'hoopla', 'proselytism', 'ballyhoo' and 'puffery'. And under antonyms? Just a few words, including 'secret'. So a secret is the opposite of advertising. Which means, in a business drenched in hoopla, whose very function is to create ballyhoo and puffery, it's fascinating to find a small quiet part of the industry toiling away, contributing to great campaigns anonymously.

The Moon Unit is a team of ghostwriters providing round-the-clock, round-the-globe pitch/treatment writing services to the world's top commercials directors. The owner goes by the pseudonym of Alf, short for Alpha, in keeping with the outfit's lunar theme. A Brit now based in New Zealand, Alf was born in "the glorious county of Essex" and started out producing promos for MTV, BBC, Sci-Fi, Channel 4 and others, then spent around 12 years directing TV commercials. "I was a fairly successful director working in several markets: Asia, Australia/New Zealand, UK and Europe. I met a lot of directors and agency people and I built up a network of people around the world," he explains. He then realised he was, "a better writer than a director" and started helping fellow directors write pitches and treatments. Soon his services were being recommended – those he'd helped were winning more pitches – and the ghostwriting took off. After a couple of years he found himself writing speeches for a prime minister whose name, of course, I can't divulge. "Writing for a politician is dreadful, you have to learn to yawn with your mouth shut," he recalls. "Once the copy has gone through the private secretary and press secretary it's so watered down, you think 'Why am I bothering?' It's horrible, I did it for four years and just about escaped with my sanity intact."

“Sometimes you get someone who says ‘You write what I say. This is MY vision.’ The main thing you have to learn about being a ghostwriter is to have no ego.”



Alf relocated to New Zealand and was down the pub one night with his chum – a Cannes Lion-winning creative director for top agencies, including Saatchi – when the ghostwriting idea started to take shape. This chum observed that, in a way, he’d always been a ghostwriter, finding voices for brands to communicate with consumers. So in 2011 Alpha and friend, codename Omega, launched The Moon Unit. “We called ourselves The Moon Unit because New Zealand is so remote you might as well be on the moon. It started off as a joke, then it kind of stuck,” explains Alf. “We thought, okay, if we’re ghostwriters, we should have a ghost logo, but the white hoods made it look like we were the Ku Klux Klan, so we thought, let’s be astronauts.”

Though he’s a family man with a six-week-old baby and an 18 year old (“I drink beer with one, change the other’s nappy”), Alf certainly delivers on his company’s promise of a fast-response 24/7 service. Early one evening in London – around 6am NZ time, I sent him an email asking if he’d be free for a Skype interview later, assuming he’d be asleep. “Sleep?” he replied, barely a nanosecond after my finger had left the send button, “plenty time for sleep

when you’re dead. Let’s Skype now.” I asked him to turn on his camera, a rarity due to the anonymity thing – his clients never want to be seen and rarely want to see their ‘ghosts’ – and there he was in his Wellington home office with a vast map of the world on the wall behind him, looking every inch the global communicator. “We realised when we set up The Moon Unit we needed to be active in all time zones so we could offer an instant response.” Last year he bought out Omega, so is the sole owner with 10 creatives on his team, a mix of writers, picture researchers and designers – TMU also provides visuals to complete the package. There are offices around the world, from Spock in Tokyo, to Gamma in LA and Sputnik, his European CCO, based in Berlin. “Sputnik is on the other end of the clock, so when I go to sleep he picks up the comms. Because, yes, I have to sleep sometimes,” he admits.

After growing the business via word-of-mouth recommendations, Alf and his team then went ‘undercover’ to provide an anonymous service that’s been hired by some of the world’s top commercials directors. Off the record he lists an impressive client list, a who’s who of production companies. “Most directors don’t like it to be known that they have their pitches written for them and much of our work is under NDAs. It never ceases to fascinate me that we can get a job pitching on campaigns worth millions of dollars and people are placing a massive amount of trust in us, but they don’t know who we are,” muses Alf. “We all work under pseudonyms but are happy to turn on our Skype cameras any time for our clients. Most of them prefer to talk but not switch on video. It amuses me that I could walk down the street past several directors we’ve helped to nail jobs worth six, sometimes seven figures, yet they wouldn’t recognise us. But some of the early clients I still write for do know me by my real name. They’re confused that I have this alternative covert persona.”

The loneliness of the long-distance pitch writer

What has been his marketing strategy? “We beam transmissions from the moon to planet Earth.” So, he sends out the odd email. “We have clients whose first language isn’t English. Big growth markets for us are China, Russia, Turkey and Asia. And we get plenty of work from Italy, Germany, all European countries apart from France – only ever one or two jobs from there...”

Other clients are those who just want to present a more polished pitch, but his main clients are successful US and UK directors who are too busy on shoots to write. Do they ever come to his team with half-formed ideas that need working up? “The ones we like to nurture are the ones who say ‘These are my ideas, can you come up with something in that area?’” As his previous career included six months as a CD, Alf is always happy to contribute. “Our most successful relationships are those where we collaborate and become like another creative.”

Not everyone wants more input, though. “Sometimes you get someone who says ‘You write what I say. This is MY vision.’ The main thing you have to learn about being a ghostwriter is to have no ego. If the director wants something, go with it. If he ignores your ideas, that’s fine.”

Apart from the healthy day rate they charge (“We work with the cream, we are not cheap and we won’t cut our prices.”) the job could seem less than rewarding, particularly for ad industry types, ie extroverts not averse to a little praise. With a team comprised of lone ‘astronauts’ in outposts round the globe and client interaction being either screen- or phone-based. I ask him if he ever misses face-to-face meetings? “We always Skype. I’ve never met a director face-to-face, but I am fine with that. We live in an IT age where we can all be digital nomads now.”

We say our farewells and, with Skype’s *Star Trek*-style bleep, I dispatch Alpha and his pixelated image back through space to his side of the planet. **S**



“Clients are much more interested in a female perspective and a female influence. So it feels really good to be rare, and not just be the typical trainer-wearing, T-shirt-wearing male creative director.”

PRINCIPLES OF PLACE

The middle of the road and the comfort zone are two areas that Elspeth Lynn avoids. Shunning the safety of her own successful co-founded shop, zig, she left Toronto for London to help Profero bag numerous plaudits and, since 2012, has been group ECD of M&C Saatchi London. She tells *Tim Cumming* about the spaces she does like to occupy, including the front end of a horse

When your idea of a relaxing break from the responsibility of being group ECD of M&C Saatchi is to renovate and sell on properties in central London (four over six years) or, failing that, wilderness walking on the Isle of Skye, it's safe to say that concepts of space play a big part in your life. Trailing success and acclaim in both traditional and digital platforms, Elspeth Lynn has a particularly refined, multi-dimensional sense of space - that's public, living and imaginative space, rather than outer space per se, though *Dr Who* does indeed come in to the story.

Since joining M&C Saatchi from digital agency Profero in 2012, she's overseen innovative space-fillers such as the House of Peroni experience at 64 Lincoln's Inn Fields, led major cross-platform campaigns for Transport for London, NatWest, and Virgin Holidays, and refashioned M&C Saatchi right down to its interior décor and creative identity. "I absolutely love reimagining spaces," she enthuses breezily over a midweek breakfast (egg white omelette with slices of avocado) at the elegant Ham Yard Hotel a few minutes from her office in Golden Square. "I'm interested

in the whole notion of space," she says. "I loved doing House of Peroni over the past couple of years, because it's about the branding of a space as opposed to an ad. Dimensionalising the ingredients in a space is a really fascinating thing."

She speaks with a soft but distinct Canadian accent but actually she's an Essex girl, born in Greenford, who emigrated to Canada with her Scottish parents when she was seven. She can remember the moment that move was decided upon. "I was watching *Dr Who* by myself in the living room when [the TV and] the power ■

“I’m interested in the whole notion of space... a strategy and an idea for a space; I loved doing House of Peroni over the past couple of years, because it’s about the branding of a space as opposed to an ad.”

went off. My father opened the door, saw there was no power and said ‘Bloody hell, we’re moving to Canada.’” And so they went, leaving English weather, glam rock, *Dr Who* and power cuts behind and settling in Toronto. “It is a very nice place, very nice people, but the trouble is,” she smiles, “it’s middle of the road in every sense. It’s safe, but safe in a way that isn’t very interesting.”

The ‘rare’ quality of being female

To make it more interesting, she studied art and art history at university in Hamilton, near Toronto, but struggled to find work after she graduated, and found herself, briefly, working in “a very small print shop pasting up business cards for a guy who had absolutely no design sense at all”. She laughs uproariously at the memory. “It was summer 1986, and the people around me were – well, it was just a job to them – and I thought, ‘This is not my life, I need to discover what my life is about,’ and that’s why I applied to art college.”

There, she studied for a BA in advertising and came to the course with the no-time-to-lose motivation of a mature student, and that motivation paid off. “I worked crazy hours,” she says, “did everything I could because I couldn’t stop thinking about the memory of that printing shop.” More laughter. Graduating in 1990 – pre-internet, with just one computer in the whole college – hers was a solid training in the basic principles of ideas and creativity. What drew her to advertising was the application of art as much as its creation. “The relief was that I loved having a task,” she says. “I loved having boundaries to work with. And I had teachers who really cared about what they did. And they were all in the industry.”

One of them, DDB creative director Allan Kazmer, hired her for her first art directing job. Two years later, she’s at MacLaren McCann, art directing campaigns for Coffee-mate. A year later, she’s masterminding work for IKEA at Roche Macaulay, and in 1995 she becomes art director and vice president at Leo Burnett, handling the innovative Fruit of the Loom and Special K campaigns, and meeting her future creative partner, copywriter Lorraine Tao. “I had had male creative partners until then, and had never really felt... understood,” she says. “Lorraine and I were opposite in personality – she was very calm and steady and nothing fazed her, whereas I was super-excited and passionate. We had the most wonderful friendship – I think that in advertising, no matter what happens, you have got to have that

one person you can look at and go, ‘I can’t believe we got through that...’” The two of them made a reputation for themselves in the face of some rigidly old-fashioned attitudes when it came to sexual politics at work. “When I began, no one was interested in a young female art director, in terms of what they had to say. I remember a very senior account person at DDB telling me, ‘You just need to be quiet at this meeting’... And I was bursting because I knew the conversation was heading off in the wrong direction. It was so frustrating.”

When she joined McCann, she was the first woman to be hired into the creative department in 14 years. Now that’s what you call sexism in the workplace. How have things changed? “Of course,” she smiles, “there are now a lot more than there used to be, but there’s still only a few per cent of female creatives in the whole industry. The difference is that clients are much more interested in a female perspective and a female influence. So it feels really good to be rare, and not just be the typical trainer-wearing, T-shirt-wearing male creative director. There’s a lot of them out there, and a lot of great ones – I admire them tremendously – but I love still being unique; it gives me a different perspective on things, in terms of the way I work and the kinds of things I like to do and how I make clients feel.”

Banish the ego, get on with the work

A turning point in Lynn’s career was setting up zig in 1999 with Tao and business partner Andy Macaulay, who she’d met during her brief stint working at the agency he co-founded, Roche Macaulay. Tao and Lynn were both at Ammirati. “We decided if those idiots can run an agency, we can, too,” she laughs, and over an agreeable sashimi lunch, Macaulay, who’d grown frustrated with the direction his own agency was taking, invited them to do just that. “We rented a space and a photocopier, the office we chose had a pile of rubbish in it, and that was it. Everything fell into place. It was definitely one of the most exciting times – we didn’t know what was going to happen; it was just the three of us and a photocopier and my dining room table, and no clients to speak of. We were creating something out of nothing. It took two years to get it up and running.”

zig grew rapidly from zero to 135 employees with offices in Toronto and Chicago, bringing in the business of clients including Unilever, Virgin Mobile, Molson Coors, IKEA, and Pfizer, and won *Marketing* magazine’s agency of the year in 2002,

just three years after pushing open the door onto that rented, rubbish-strewn first office space. Talk about renovation. zig remained in the top five agency ranking from then on until they sold the business to Chuck Porter to become Crispin Porter + Bogusky Canada in 2010. The awards came in from Cannes, The One Show, D&AD, The Clios, and others, with gold Lions for Vim/Unilever’s 2004 spot *Prison Visitor*, 2008’s IKEA *Low Voice*, and 2006’s *Get Scared More Often* campaign for Scream TV.

Above all, Lynn says, zig taught her about the importance of collaboration, and taking care of business by getting away from the strictures of a job title and the ego that goes with it, in order to get the real work done. “You need to do what you need to do and care about your work,” she says. “I’ve always cared, and I think clients can always tell if you don’t.” Now, at M&C Saatchi, she says, they just want people to love working on their business. “It really isn’t that complicated. And it doesn’t cost any money for an agency to do. It’s free. It’s about finding people who genuinely care.”

MINI endeavours, maxi success

A kernel of restlessness threaded with the pull of family ties set her next move in motion after selling zig. “I had a lovely secure life in Toronto with people I loved,” she says. “I couldn’t be more comfortable, and that was perhaps part of the problem.” So, in 2009, she moved to London, the last of her family to return to the UK. “I felt it would be interesting to strip all of it away and just be me, land on my feet and see what happens,” she remembers. “For me, it was essential for life. I’ve had no regrets doing it.”

In 2009, inspired by Lars Bastholm’s adage that “if your skill is digital, learn storytelling; if your skill is storytelling, learn digital”, Lynn joined Profero as ECD. “They were digitally conceived with no sense of brand or idea, while I was more brand advertising with a very thin knowledge of digital. So, I thought it was the right thing to immerse myself in it.” Overseeing M&S’s brand advance into the realms of digital, creating the advertising for global fashion business ASOS, and masterminding a new World Record attempt to cram as many people as possible into a MINI Countryman – another Cannes Lion winner in 2011 – Lynn’s experience at Profero underlined the importance to her of a strong core idea that could power a whole fleet of multi-channel communications. “Too many agencies are still

Quickfire Q&A

What's your favourite ever ad? Honda *Grrr*.

What product could you not live without? PG Tips.

What are your thoughts on social media? Love it. It's an honest space. Though sometimes too honest. It helps us understand how people behave, what they watch and what they enjoy.

How do you relieve stress during a shoot? Strong cup of tea. Some form of chocolate.

What's the last film you watched and was it any good? *Birdman*. Brilliant. Love the dialogue. Love the performances.

What was the last concert/performance you went to? *The Marriage Of Figaro*.

What film do you think everyone should have seen? Any of Woody Allen's good ones.

If you weren't doing the job you do now, what would you like to be? The creative director of a brand or an interior designer.


Tell us one thing about yourself that most people won't know... I'm British. I was born in the UK.

too focussed on scripts," she says. "But what's the thought underpinning it, so it can be a digital thing, a physical thing, and a social thing? How do you get people engaged and involved? One thing I came up with that I think worked, was a tagline that went, 'ideas that people can belong to'. If you don't have them, it's hard to get that social stickiness that you need." And as Lynn points out, the stickiest social media memes of the past year – the ice bucket challenge and no-makeup selfies – came from individuals, not from agencies.

Getting out of the back end

The call to replace Graham Fink at M&C Saatchi came in 2012, via headhunter Grace Blue. Frustrated by her feeling of being "stuck at the back end of the horse" at Profero – being given stuff to work with that "had no dimension to it, no story behind it, so that I didn't know what to do with it digitally or socially", she answered the call. "I had two things going for me: I was a female creative, and there are few of us; and I had digital and traditional, which I found extraordinarily helpful. I loved the fact that it didn't have to be about print ads anymore, but that you could start figuring out what I call brand ingredients and how they operate no matter what the channel."

So, whether it's fashioning the House of Peroni, managing her own recreational renovations, expanding the space for other women creatives in advertising, or creating new kinds of spaces for brands in social media and digital, the creative spaces in which Lynn works seem permanently up for scrutiny. "Mostly everyone now is part of an integrated team," she says of M&C Saatchi, though she emphasises the importance of traditional forms, great copywriters and great art directors even on new speedy platforms. "No matter what space you're in, things still need to be beautifully written, and beautifully realised," she says, "so those traditional skills are incredibly important, but you also need your digital experts, and people who really understand that space."

The place where the idea lives and multiplies is paramount though. She returns to the theme of the idea that connects all the spaces. "Most of the work now comes from clients who expect you to take an idea and make sure it can go anywhere," she affirms. "We were doing a pitch a few months ago, and the client said, 'You guys seem to be the masters of integration,' and I'm so happy that's happened with M&C." That big smile again. "I'm hugely happy I've made it more integrated." 



"I never much liked advertising that doesn't feel true to the brand and honest about what the product delivers. In that way it's good to see brands connecting with people in ways that are more genuine today."



THE ADVENTURES OF Ari Merkin

Ari Merkin is a disruptive thinker whose time at the likes of Crispin Porter + Bogusky, Fallon, and Cliff Freeman & Partners has led to some of the most groundbreaking work that the industry has seen. A member of the AAF Advertising Hall of Achievement, Merkin sits down with *Simon Wakelin* to discuss his tenure in adland and what it takes to deliver meaningful ads in the modern age...

“I got into the business to think up great work and loved the salesmanship that went into client meetings. It took years before I could think of myself as a creative leader.”

Ari Merkin began his career as a copywriter in the Big Apple at Grace & Rothschild, an agency formed in 1986 by Roy Grace and Diane Rothschild following decades of groundbreaking work at DDB. “Sadly they’re both gone now – but Roy and Diane were ad legends, no doubt about it,” explains Merkin talking about his first experiences in advertising. “When you got their approval nothing else mattered. G&R created classic pieces of advertising, just the right balance of visuals and headline working together in harmony to create a story. You couldn’t hide behind a fancy layout or cool typeface. It was either a great idea or it wasn’t.”

After copywriting for a number of years, Merkin headed to Miami, accepting the position of creative writer before moving up to CD at Crispin Porter + Bogusky. “It took me a while to get the hang of being a creative director,” he confesses. “I got into the business to think up great work and loved the salesmanship that went into client meetings. It took years before I could think of myself as a creative leader.” But he soon found his footing, being involved in the creation of a batch of iconic ads rolled out by the agency over a number of years, one of the most notable being *Lamp* for IKEA, which was helmed by Spike Jonze and collected a host of awards around the world including the 2003 Film Grand Prix at Cannes. “That was a perfect storm of awesomeness,” he recalls. “Everybody involved made the idea better and Spike did such a masterful job making it feel far more cinematic than we could have ever imagined. Sometimes it all just comes together.”

A perfect storm and a smoking spot

Other work to hit the cultural zeitgeist included *Body Bags* for the American Legacy Foundation, a powerful spot that picked up awards at the Clio, One Show and ANDYs. Considered to be one of the most effective public service ads of all time, it shows 1,200 simulated body bags being dumped on the sidewalk outside the offices of Philip Morris, demonstrating the number of deaths attributed to smoking each day. “We literally had to work undercover in NYC,” recalls Merkin on creating the unforgettable ad. “At one point a horrified woman with a child walked past and asked what was going on. I explained the commercial to her, and she stared at me blankly for a moment and said, ‘My sister died

of lung cancer. Mind if I carry one of the bags?’” You couldn’t help feeling passionate about the cause. The shoot felt more like a protest and we thought we’d be shut down for sure.”

The time was a ripe period for Crispin Porter + Bogusky, creating ads that brought the agency to the forefront of everybody’s minds at the turn of the millennium. “It was like being a member of a 70-person rock band,” he says on his time at the shop. “If Grace & Rothschild was about the craft of advertising, CP+B was about turning the industry on its head. Alex [Bogusky] had great respect for classic work – but he was more than ready to toss it out the window if it got in the way of doing what was right for a brand. And he changed things. We changed things. Living in Miami, I thought the Crispin office was the coolest place you could possibly be.”

As long as you’ve got your *Elf*

A brief stint as ACD at Cliff Freeman & Partners followed his Crispin experience. “When you get a call from Cliff Freeman, you go,” he explains. “I felt like that kung fu guy completing his training at the Shaolin temple.”

ECD duties at Fallon NY came next for Merkin. His challenge became building a creative department from scratch. “I would stay at the office until two or three am every night, looking at the books of young creatives until we finally got the mix right,” he explains on shaping the agency’s culture. “It was such an amazing group; account, planning, media, everybody. I really loved that team. In 2004 we were just 35 people but, pound for pound, I think we were the best agency in the world that year.”

Under Merkin’s tutelage Fallon NY became one of the top 10 most-awarded agencies in the world, servicing clients such as Starbucks, Time and Virgin Mobile. A wry campaign for the latter, called *For The Love Of Music*, promoted Virgin Mobile’s ringtones without actually airing the ringtones and won Merkin unexpected honours as a director at the AICP Awards. The first spot *Call Waiting*, was directed by the creative team and produced in-house by Fallon, while the next five were turned over to the directing team of Tom Kuntz and Mike Maguire. “It was a campaign where kids sing their phone conversations to camera while standing on the city street,” explains Merkin. “The client didn’t love the idea initially,

so we called in some talented actors from Juilliard [drama school] and shot the first spot ourselves. Then Kuntz and Maguire came in and modelled the rest of the campaign from the original spot, adding their own magic. When showtime came around the first spot made the cut, and won.”

The co-founding of his own agency, Toy, in 2005 was a big step for the advertising journeyman. Joining forces with his former Fallon co-workers Anne Bologna and David Dabill, Merkin explains that they opened the agency after recognising that the industry was about to change. “At the time agencies were tacking on ‘engagement’ departments as if it was a box they had to check,” he says. “We thought an agency should have engagement at its core, making work that’s meant to be sought out and passed along – work as engaging as a new toy.”

Toy immediately took engagement to a whole new level creating *ElfYourself* for OfficeMax, an interactive viral phenomenon allowing visitors to upload images of themselves or their friends, and see them as dancing elves. The site received over 36 million visits in five weeks. The following season saw the campaign widen even further with viewership rising to over 193 million visits – an insane number that made it the biggest viral phenomenon of all time. The campaign entered modern consciousness in a way that has not been repeated, even *The Today Show* and *Good Morning America* creating their very own dancing holiday greeting for viewers to see.

“*Elf* was the first chance we really had to prove our engagement premise,” says Merkin, blown away by the success of the campaign. “We made a risky decision to put what little budget we had into production of content instead of media. For a while there the dancing elf didn’t even make the cut because I was determined to find a better name. Our project manager Amanda Sisk suggested ‘Elf Yourself’. 200 million visits later, I think I bought her a car or something.”

Success with Snoopy’s Super Bowl

Merkin shuttered Toy in 2010, rejoining Crispin as its ECD before finally forming Ari Merkin LLC, an independent content company for brands creating advertising, short films, and social and digital content. He immediately garnered success at Super Bowl 2014, joining with Passion Pictures to create *National Anthem* for MetLife featuring



“Alex [Bogusky] had great respect for classic work – but he was more than ready to toss it out the window if it got in the way of doing what was right for a brand. And he changed things. We changed things.”

“It’s also understanding how every brand has a voice of its own. ...I think that’s why I’ve been successful at selling ideas. I get clients. I get voice. I get brands. And at the end of the day, I’m just another creative guy looking to make something great.”


the *Peanuts* cartoon characters embracing the excitement and anticipation of the moment. “The game was taking place at MetLife Stadium, and MetLife had bought the slot just before kick off,” he explains. “We had under a week to present ideas, and thankfully *Anthem* was hands down the winner. Next thing we knew my tiny company was in production on a Super Bowl spot and I was getting invited to see the game from the suite at MetLife Stadium.”

Questioned on how advertising has changed since those early days in New York, Merkin answers that the era is different – but the message stays the same. “I find it simpler than it was even just a few years ago,” he answers, noting a level of transparency in branding that he feels is encouraging. “I never much liked advertising that doesn’t feel true to the brand and honest about what the product delivers. In that way it’s good to see brands connecting with people in ways that are more genuine today.”

Merkin also feels that interactions are effectively more organic in the modern age, with brands understanding that if they want people’s loyalty, they have to make it worth their while. “Our job has always been to create stuff that people want to do and see, regardless of medium. Great creative shops have done that for decades. We see opportunity in every available way to deliver a brand message. And when there’s an idea at the core holding it all together, campaigns can feel cohesive and simple.”

Supplying the demand for greatness

Quizzed on future challenges, Merkin remarks that being a director has great appeal, admitting it’s often more stressful for him not to direct. “It’s not that I wouldn’t trust other directors,” he says, currently repped as a director at Supply&Demand. “It’s just that I get really itchy to do it myself. Supply&Demand owner Tim Case has been pushing me to direct for years. I don’t know why I waited so long to take him up on his offer. Directing for brands is about having a vision and making sure the train stays on the tracks,” he goes on. “It’s also understanding how every brand has a voice of its own. You need to be able to capture that. I think that’s why I’ve been successful at selling ideas. I get clients. I get voice. I get brands. And at the end of the day, I’m just another creative guy looking to make something great.” **S**

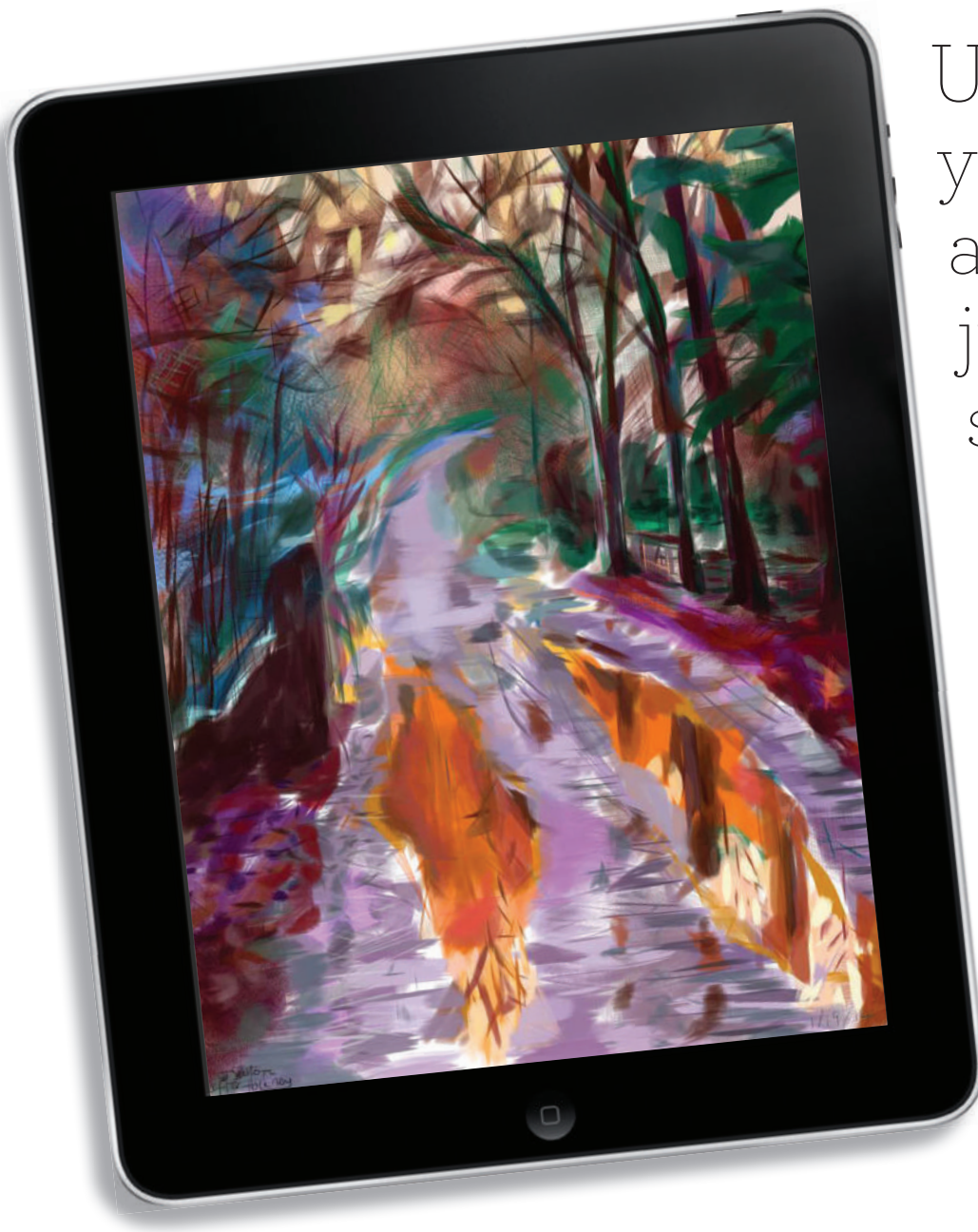


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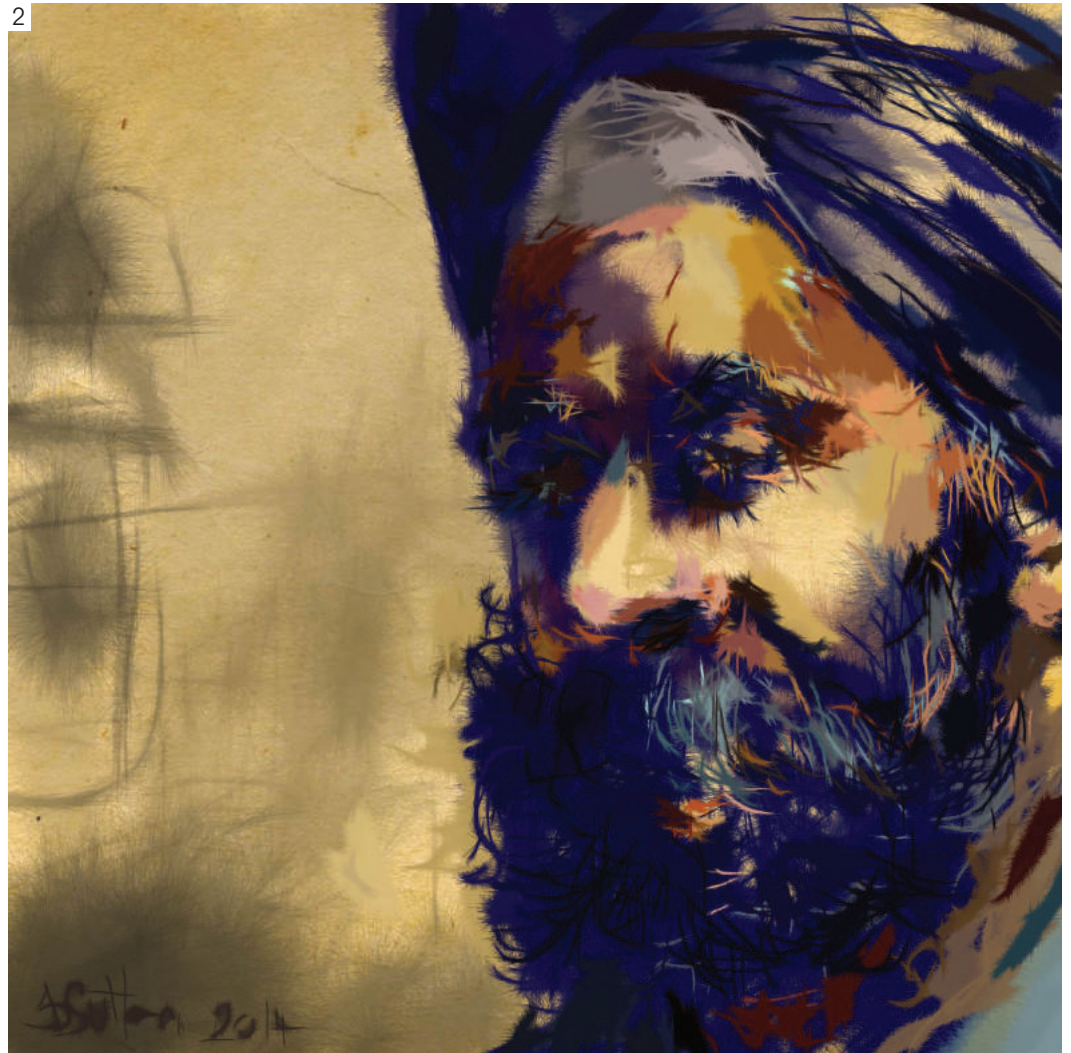
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new digital art
democracy
and meets the
pioneers of a
new medium

finger painting



“It’s just a matter of time before the barriers separating mobile digital art from non-mobile digital art will break down and the word ‘mobile’ will become superfluous – and digital media will be considered ‘conventional’.”

Jeremy Sutton



Page 4 Banana, 2014, Mike Mittendorf, Sketch Pad on a Nokia 520 phone

Opening page After Hockney #1, 2013, Jeremy Sutton, painted on iPad Air using Sketch Club with Pencil by 53, while viewing a video replay screen of David Hockney's work in David Hockney: Bigger Exhibition, De Young Museum, San Francisco

1 Ervin, 2014, Jeremy Sutton, painted from life on iPad Air using Art Set Pro and Sketch Club with Pencil by 53

2 Ishmeet, 2014, Jeremy Sutton, created from life on iPad Air using Sketch Club with Pencil by 53

All of us start off as artists. Once the average junior human has got beyond the stage of purely filling tummy and nappy, they move on, via percussion, construction and demolition, to the visual arts – creating images and interpreting their environment via fingertip smudges, crayons and paint. By adulthood, for most of us the desire to daub has long been squeezed out by pursuits considered more vocational, and a full-time artist is seen as a rare creature, inspiring awe, often envy.

But since the launch of drawing and painting apps, such as Brushes in 2008, a quiet revolution has taken place that could affect a subtle shift in our concept of ‘the artist’. The habitual faffing with phones or tablets that marks modern life no longer means the user is just communicating, gaming or surfing, they could well be painting with pixels. Digital art is no longer the preserve of the illustrator on a studio Mac, it’s on the streets and in the hands of the everyman.

But what might have been seen as amateur app bothering or a fleeting gimmick has now moved into mainstream art, helped along by professional artists adopting the new medium with relish.

Lake Michigan-based artist Susan Murtaugh, who worked in advertising and graphic design for 45 years, has been producing digital art for 20 years using Cintiq and Photoshop. She became a beta tester first for the desktop painting program SketchBook and then for the Brushes app, developed by Steve Sprang.

“I saw an iPhone painting by Disney art director, Stéphane Kardos, and emailed asking him how hard it was to do. He wrote back telling me to get one and get to work. I did and I’ve never looked back.” In 2009, Murtaugh appeared in an ABC news feature on mobile digital art with Kardos and Jorge Columbo, whose iPhone illustration made the June cover of *The New Yorker* the same year.

Various mobile digital art shows began popping up around the States as the movement grew, but it was the unveiling of David Hockney’s stunning iPad images at his Royal Academy, London exhibition, *A Bigger Picture*, in 2012, that placed the medium firmly on the global art scene.

“I believe the fame of Hockney and Columbo made it much easier for me and other artists to promote our work,” says Murtaugh. “It’s still in ▶



1 *Three Strikes*, 2014, Susan Murtaugh, SketchBook Pro, Frax and iColorama on iPad

2 *Pineapple*, 2014, Mike Mittendorfer, Sketch Pad on a Nokia 520 phone

3 *Concentration*, 2012, Susan Murtaugh, SketchBook Pro on iPad

progress, though, and educating others is all part of the process. The hardest misconception to overcome is that we're just pushing a button in an app, and art appears."

Murtaugh spoke at the Second Annual Mobile Digital Arts and Creativity Summit in California last year, along with San Francisco-based British artist Jeremy Sutton, who's been a digital artist, authority and pioneer for more than 20 years.

When more of Hockney's iPad art was revealed at *A Bigger Exhibition* at San Francisco's De Young gallery in 2013, Sutton performed a live iPad drawing event at the opening and taught workshops in the gallery. "My students and I would stand in front of our favourite Hockney works and draw them on our iPads. The level of excitement and awe was palpable!" he enthuses.

"Each of us was like a digital art Pied Piper attracting a little crowd of onlookers. What surprised me was when people exclaimed 'Oh, so you can draw on the iPad?' while they were surrounded by Hockney's huge iPad prints and his replay videos [following the development of each piece] endlessly repeating on screens. It made

me realise the power of seeing mobile art in action, created in real time before your eyes with the human hand and the iPad. It also made me realise that this was art for everyone. Everyone we met, old and young, wanted to have a go."

Digital painting from real life

A true polymath, Sutton started taking art classes while studying physics at Oxford University, and his fascination with new technologies led him to try digital painting in 1991 – he is one of only 36 Corel Painter Masters worldwide and teaches iPad painting internationally.

He got excited about the artistic possibilities of mobile devices after seeing Steve Jobs introduce the iPhone at MacWorld 2007 in San Francisco, and experimented with iPhone painting, but found the small screen limiting. After the 2010 release of the iPad, however, everything changed.

"From the moment I started drawing in earnest on the iPad I loved it. It was small and light enough to be truly portable and something I could carry with me, while being big enough to feel comfortable for sketching."

“There are many photorealists and there are some killer abstractionists now. This is still a tool in its infancy. Time will give us more styles and more ways to express ourselves, perhaps in ways we can’t even imagine.”

Susan Murtaugh



Murtaugh also loves the ‘grab-it-and-go’ element of mobile digital art, while Hockney, who carries his iPad around in a specially designed jacket pocket, finds iPad drawing “much more interesting than computer drawing because it’s quicker. You can pick up a colour from another colour. You can work very fast [which] is something most draughtsmen are interested in.”

In his action painting events and workshops Sutton demonstrates the thrill of live drawing. “The convenience of the iPad makes it an ideal live sketching tool,” he says. “I love sketching portraits from life. There is something so special about the interaction between artist and model. It is such a different experience to working from a photo. As Hockney said, ‘Photography is all right if you don’t mind looking at the world from the point of view of a paralysed Cyclops – for a split second. But that’s not what it’s like to live in the world, or to convey the experience of living in the world.’”

The speed and ease of art apps mean they’ve been embraced for drawing from life, allowing a broader range of styles than the over-airbrushed look that has previously been prevalent.

“It seems many of the websites showing digital art in general, not specifically mobile digital art, tend to be showing more of the airbrushed, smooth-skinned fantasy type of art,” says Sutton. “The mobile digital art that’s [emerging] seems to include more variety of approach and more use of thicker, bolder brush strokes. This may be because mobile devices lend themselves to quick, spontaneous drawing and looser marks.”

Breaking down barriers

Sutton says he’s excited to see that artists are experimenting with the new medium, pushing it in new directions, and Murtaugh, who has curated many international digital art shows, sees a world of possibilities ahead. “I see so much different art now. There are many photorealists and there are some killer abstractionists; Patricio Villarreal Bórquez and Helene Goldberg are two of my favourites. This is still a tool in its infancy. Time will give us more styles and more ways to express ourselves, perhaps in ways we can’t even imagine.”

So, just like any other new art medium that’s emerged in the past, from egg tempura to screen

printing, mobile digital is leading to the creation of new artistic styles. But the new technology could also be leading to a radical shift in the way we think about media. “Defining ‘mobile digital art’ is like trying to define a moving target,” says Sutton. “It’s moving in space and time, since everything’s heading mobile. The devices we can use for digital painting are converging towards mobility from both ends of the spectrum: mobile phone screens getting larger at one end and laptop computers getting more compact and mobile at the other end. Desktop computer operating systems are evolving into universal operating systems that are indistinguishable from mobile/cloud operating systems. It’s just a matter of time before the barriers separating mobile digital art from non-mobile digital art will break down and the word ‘mobile’ will become superfluous – and digital media will be considered ‘conventional’.

I ask Murtaugh and Sutton if the new medium could also break down the barriers between artist and non-artist; if the mobility of the new tech and the ubiquity of its hardware coupled with the cheapness of its software will allow those of



“These days most people have this powerful artistic tool in their pocket. And most definitely, mobile technologies have revolutionised creative expression. I think that, ultimately, humanity can only benefit from more people making more art.”

Kerry Crocker

1 *Kirk, 2010, Susan Murtaugh, Sketchbook Pro on iPad*

us who've not painted since childhood to return to the joy of art as we go about our daily lives.

“It's funny, I had this conversation with other artists this year,” says Murtaugh. “I think we're at the beginning of a new era that appreciates creativity in all forms. Anything we can do to encourage others to get back in touch with that inner child artist should be done. I like to empower those that don't think they can, with the tools and the knowledge that all it takes is time.”

Sutton agrees that most of us start out in life “making marks and expressing ourselves in what we draw. It's not about being born with or without talent, it's a natural way we react to the world.” He feels there is a general movement in society for more people to express themselves creatively and we're also becoming more used to interacting with screens. “Anyone signing a credit card payment on an iPad enjoys a few seconds of uninhibited mobile digital art as they create a signature on the screen with their finger. It feels natural to draw on a screen now. Drawing on a device like an iPad is less intimidating for someone who doesn't think of themselves as an ‘artist’ but wants to have a go.”

But if everyone is ‘having a go’ are they actually producing anything that's any good?

Unsurprisingly, as a teacher, Sutton emphasises the importance of education: “When it comes to learning how to master the art of effective composition, use of line, shade etc, mobile digital art may be an amazing new medium but it doesn't replace art education, practice and commitment to process and learning. Even Hockney took about eight months exploring and practising with the Brushes app on his iPad, after a few years of him already using it on the iPhone, before he felt ready to produce his iPad masterpieces. A tool is a tool – it's what you do with it and the creativity you bring to it that makes a difference and produces great art.”

But is it art... and does it matter?

Kerry Crocker (aka Parasol B, parasolb.com), an artist who curated last year's Smartphone Art Show at the Carrack Modern Art Space in North Carolina, feels that the more art out there the better, “These days most people have this powerful artistic tool in their pocket. And most

definitely, mobile tech has revolutionised creative expression. I think that, ultimately, humanity can only benefit from more people making more art. But, if everyone is quickly and easily creating images the signal-to-noise ratio for quality content seems lower and lower – although it may just be that there is more content to sift through and the ratio of great to mediocre is the same as always.” So quantity doesn't necessarily mean quality. But does that matter? And what is ‘quality’ art anyway?

My neighbour Mike is an engineer, a down-to-earth man who'd never call himself an ‘artist’, but after upgrading to a phone with a decent screen he started to doodle while commuting, painting fellow travellers, then progressing to landscapes and still life. Practice having honed his natural talent, he's built up an impressive gallery. As Murtaugh says, “If you put in the time, the talent will come. And it will make you very happy.” Surely, whether it's art or not, that's got to be a force for good. **S**

For more of Jeremy Sutton's work and his thoughts on mobile digital art see jeremysutton.com and for his online tutorials see paintboxtv.com. See more of Susan Murtaugh's work on flickr.com/photos/suzi54241/



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Los Angeles, with the iconic Hollywood sign looking down from above, is at the centre of the feature film universe. But can the world of advertising, with its new-found penchant for longer form content, herald a new era for the City of Angels? We hit the freeways to find out







“We need to bring people into the agency that are not like us at all, because the more diversity that is embraced in our agency, the better it will become.”



Deutsch LA's CCO and partner Pete Favat enthuses to *Simon Wakelin* about not feeling existential gloom, the benefits of a brand having an enemy and how the convergence of content, advertising and entertainment is re-igniting Los Angeles

PETE'S POSITIVE POSITIONS

Deutsch LA lies in the Playa Vista region of Los Angeles, an area steeped in Hollywood history. Martin Scorsese used soundstages here for his Howard Hughes biopic *The Aviator*, while James Cameron filmed parts of *Titanic* and *Avatar* in the area, and *Transformers*, *Iron Man* and *Star Trek* were also lensed close by.

I sit pondering this filmic history while waiting in Deutsch for agency partner and CCO Pete Favat. We meet and I shake hands with an optimistic, upbeat chap.

Favat arrived at Deutsch back in 2013 after 14 years at Arnold in Boston. Ask why he left Boston for Los Angeles and Favat responds “A group of us owned an agency [Houston Herstek Favat] that was eventually acquired by Arnold back in 1999 so we impacted on Arnold in a big way,” he reveals. “I became Arnold’s chief creative officer not long afterwards, but felt that I was in the same place for a very long time, and if you stay somewhere too long you just become myopic.”

The discussion turns to his new life in Los Angeles, a place Favat first visited in his 20s. He admits the city tickled his fancy back then, but there were no real prospects for him at the time. “In the 80s and 90s it felt like the place to be but there were just no agencies out here,” he explains. “The general feeling was that if you moved to LA and didn’t take a job at Chiat, then you really weren’t doing anything of consequence.”

We note how times have changed and how the advent of technology has shaped a new creative

landscape, one giving rise to a vibrant community eager to shape the next big thing. The recent collision of Silicon Valley and Hollywood is evidenced by tech titan Google scooping up Frank Gehry’s celebrated Binoculars Building in Venice, plus a huge video production facility for subsidiary YouTube in a renovated Howard Hughes building less than a mile from Favat’s office space: “What we’re seeing here now is a convergence of many things,” notes Favat. “As the blurring of the lines between content, advertising and entertainment continues so does the reasoning to be here. Every city goes through its ebbs and flows, and right now Los Angeles feels like it’s happening again.”

On not hiring spark plugs

The conversation switches to Volkswagen, an account Favat handled under the Arnold banner. He was behind the heralded *Drivers Wanted* campaign for the auto company before the account moved to Deutsch in 2009 – a move that immediately caught his attention: “After Deutsch won the VW account it made the agency legit in my mind,” he explains. “They were always a really good agency, and we’d go against them all the time. I knew [VW head of marketing] Tim Ellis very well, and he explained that the account had moved to Deutsch because of its strategic thinking. That really got me curious.

“Then [co-CEO] Eric Hirshberg left Deutsch, and I got a call from [CEO] Mike Sheldon who

wanted to hire me. I really wanted to go and agonised over the decision, but the timing couldn’t have been worse,” he remembers. “Then I ran into Mike a couple of years later with [Deutsch partner/director of integrated production] Vic Palumbo and [partner/chief digital officer] Winston Binch. That night it was a done deal. Like everything in life, timing is crucial.”

Favat has been focussing on developing the agency’s culture since landing at Deutsch, discerning the right mix of creative energy to magnify its appeal, a challenge that he admits is still foremost in his mind. So what is his



“Art needs resistance, and that creates engagement. If you want to be Superman then you need that villain. The enemy is all about duality. Identify the enemy, find that tension, and you’ll also find the idea.”

1 Pete Favat

2 HTC, Gary Oldman – Ask The Internet

3 Pizza Hut, Flavor Of Now

4 Taco Bell, Ronald McDonald



“As the blurring of the lines between content, advertising and entertainment continues so does the reasoning to be here. Every city goes through its ebbs and flows, and right now LA feels like it’s happening again.”

approach? “You don’t hire basic ‘spark plugs’ who simply allow things to run smoothly,” he outlines. “And you don’t hire anyone because they’re just like you – you should run like hell from that kind of proposition.

“We need to bring people into the agency who are not like us at all, because the more diversity that is embraced in our agency, the better it will become, and that’s true from a geographical, gender and creative standpoint.”

Your enemy is your friend

Going against the grain is also a tactic. “I really like hiring people who have never created advertising at all,” he adds. “I’ve done it a couple of times now where I’ve brought in writers and art directors who have never done a piece of advertising before, but just through conversations we’ve had I knew they were smart enough to be successful in the industry.”

Favat unveils a presentation to further illustrate his approach. Entitled ‘You Need an Enemy’, it’s a provocative outline, one that sometimes rubs clients up the wrong way. But that doesn’t bother Favat, as the message is as genuine as can be: “We all need an enemy to define us and brands are no different,” he posits with a wry grin. “Look at America. It always needs an enemy because no superpower exists without one. Look at the Bible. If there was no hell and no devil then, with all due respect, there would be no Bible – just a pamphlet that says, ‘God is Amazing!’

“Antagonism brings a healthy tension, and without that tension people don’t pay attention,” he observes. “Most people stay in the middle where it’s safe, where there are no polar extremes. Clients often say, ‘OK but can’t we just say how amazing our product is instead?’ But art needs resistance, and that creates engagement. If you want to be Superman then you need that villain.

The enemy is all about duality. Identify the enemy, find that tension, and you’ll also find the idea.”

Favat believes that when advertising fails it does so because an agency has wasted its most precious resource – its creatives. “Creatives are better at expressing ideas than coming up with them,” he says. “Creatives are not great business people. I had my own agency and tanked it because I’m not a business-minded person. I always say the strategy is the idea. The problem is that many agencies are not starting off with any kind of strategy and expect creatives to come up with ideas. Unfortunately it’s a practice that has inverted the proposition. It’s all backwards.”

People can also quench creativity in the name of fear, allowing mediocrity to rule the day: “You’ll hear people say how great their meeting was, but if you ask what idea the client bought they’ll invariably say the safer one,” he continues. “In that case we didn’t have a great meeting. We actually had a terrible meeting because our best idea died. Many people operate this way. It’s like, ‘Hey, I’ve got a nice car, a big house and a cool boat so let’s go have a bad meeting!’ That’s also a big issue.”

Quizzed on his upbeat attitude and persona, Favat explains that life’s way too short for existential malaise. “Ride on the crest of the wave in the sun instead of twisting in the murky waters below,” he quips. “Don’t swim against the current, otherwise life’s going to be tough.” It’s an apt metaphor for life in California, a place where its attitude matches his own optimistic feelings on life and art.

“There is a, ‘Yeah, fuck, we’re gonna do it’ attitude to life out here in Los Angeles,” he explains. “Maybe the city’s attitude goes back to the pioneers, men placing their families in wagons and crossing Native American territory on their way to California. There were some ballsy-ass

pirates that came out here back in the day. Maybe that spirit is still part of the zeitgeist. People still risk everything to get out here.”

Delving into Favat’s creative past, I ask what, in hindsight, is his favourite work. He brings up the much praised and highly controversial *Truth* anti-smoking campaign for the American Legacy Foundation [read about Ari Merkin’s *Body Bags* spot for this campaign on page 44] “The *Truth* campaign was one of the best of the 21st century,” he says. “Its strategy was very clear – the tobacco industry lied. There was so much to play with, and so many ways to be shockingly frank and honest. We weren’t looking for ideas because we already had the idea, just words from internal documents used against the industry. It was more about discovering the most compelling expression of that idea.”

Compelling expressions should soon be afoot in work for new client Sprint, leaving Favat to ponder how to do battle against rivals AT&T and Verizon. “Sprint’s new CEO [Marcelo Claure] is an amazing guy,” he reveals. “He’s a self-made billionaire with an entrepreneurial spirit. He’s done things his own way his whole life, and it’s that kind of fearlessness that people like to embrace. We will work tirelessly for him to bring the brand to the forefront of people’s minds.”

A band can be a brand

As for other upcoming propositions, Favat notes how Deutsch is making headway into the music industry, connecting with labels and artists through the agency’s music director Dave Rocco. “We’re working with Capitol Records right now, looking to brand their artists while examining the potential of Capitol creating acts for us to market and brand,” he outlines. “It’s an exciting proposition. After all, Gene Simmons taught us all how a band can be a global brand.” **[S]**

Furlined founder and advertising veteran Diane McArter talks to *Simon Wakelin* about what she believes LA has to offer, revealing what it takes to succeed in a male dominated industry and how true success nowadays is a genderless equation

THE FUTURE IS FEMALE

When Diane McArter arrived on the West Coast 14 years ago, culture shock ensued. What she discovered was a provocative city of shifting identities and endless surprises – a far cry from the hustle of life on the East Coast. “At first the experience was isolating,” recalls McArter of the Angelino lifestyle. “I was living in a canyon surrounded by nature and just couldn’t identify with my surroundings.”

It’s an understandable response from a New Yorker arriving in La La Land. Nowhere in the world are two cities defined in such polarising fashion as New York and Los Angeles. They are the dynamic and the static, the masculine and the feminine. New York exists as a vertical metropolis, an architecturally intriguing city of upwardly rising structures that support and frame a masculine-minded identity. Los Angeles, however, sprawls outward, not upward. No matter how tall its skyline, no matter how high its mountains, Los Angeles is generally thought of as a horizontal city.

“What Los Angeles did allow me was a time of introspection and an opportunity to grow,” continues McArter. “What was once rigid, hierarchical and opaque in my life became more adaptable, collaborative and transparent.”

LA-dy state of mind

McArter soon found herself opening up to her new locale, discovering a city of breezy structures and open spaces with an expanse of female traits that mirrored her own nurturing, feminine state of mind. As she grew accustomed to her new environment, so her confidence and drive started to really blossom.

McArter realised how she’d often wrestle with feelings of inadequacy back in New York. “There was no time to reflect,” she remembers of her former life on the East Coast. “The business was

predominantly male and led by so many charismatic guys that I thought I had to have a more masculine identity. But then I died in Los Angeles and came alive again. All this expansiveness out here allowed that to happen.”

As a new life and challenging career unfurled, so did more creative opportunities, leading to the launch of Furlined in 2005. “Furlined has been an authentic constant for me,” she says. “I always take the long view – invest in talent and ideas, envision their creative potential and see the true essence of their abilities come to life. Furlined is in a constant state of growth and evolution, aiming to fulfill the utmost potential for the directors and the work, and that’s an exciting proposition for me.”

McArter believes that plugging into culture in an honest and direct way is the only way forward. To that end she proactively brings in anthropologists, mythologists and other thought leaders on various projects to enrich people’s experiences and to inform and enlighten all. For McArter it’s about digging deeper and mining for meaning in the best possible way.


“It’s about depth,” she explains. “Our best results come when agencies allow us higher up the information ladder. Instead of resorting to handing out superficial, fragmented pieces of information, the best agencies allow us in. They allow us to dig deep and understand insight and strategy. It’s then that we become strategic, creative partners – not just vendors. It also takes bravery on the part of agencies, but we’ve seen incredibly positive results working with the likes of Droga5 and Pereira & O’Dell in this fashion.”

McArter also admits that successful business practice also requires more than a singular vision, and so she has welcomed ex-Stink partner Robert Herman to the Furlined fold as its managing director. “Collaboration is essential in this new era,” she says on teaming up with Herman. “In

“The business was predominantly male and led by so many charismatic guys that I thought I had to have a more masculine identity. But then I died in Los Angeles and came alive again. All this expansiveness out here allowed that to happen.”

order to expand the business I realised that I needed to give up some control. Robert helps me to see beyond the boundaries of my own vision. Two cultures are better than one and Robert’s vast international perspective and numerous relationships bring immense value to the company.”

Making it up as we go along

Discussing the Furlined roster, McArter explains that she only does business with like-minded directors who share her company’s values. She beams when discussing the talent and their recent work, genuinely honoured to have them all. “Dan Lindsay and TJ Martin [directing duo who won an Oscar in 2012 for their documentary feature 



"The LA River – a 48-mile concrete artery flowing through hundreds of cities within this city. Symbolically for me, the river connects the feminine and the masculine, the vertical and horizontal. In this next year the LA River will undergo an ambitious revitalisation project to reclaim its natural beauty and redefine how we move through and experience Los Angeles. The revitalisation project promises to transform the river into LA's Central Park."

LA Story

"The story I told myself when I first moved to LA 14 years ago was that navigating this massive, concrete sprawl was a necessary sacrifice for the growth of my business. It wasn't love at first sight. LA can be so isolating. However, with isolation can come the opportunity for introspection and ultimately expansion. LA was not here to coddle me; little did I know she would become the crucible in which I would transform my life and my business. In contrast to the more masculine business systems that I grew up in, I was entering a new landscape. What was once rigid, hierarchical, and opaque was becoming adaptable, collaborative, and transparent.

It wasn't until I looked beyond the glitz and the glamour, the concrete and congestion, that I was able to discover the history, the light and shadow percolating through Los Angeles. Like all great cities, LA is in a constant state of becoming... much like me, I discovered. Built and sustained on a currency of dreams, this city embodies the cycle of creation, destruction and regeneration.

We're currently collaborating with urban and media historian Norman Klein on a cultural project entitled, *Cities*. Los Angeles is our first city.

Norman writes about LA, "Around 2000, the glamour of 90s globalism simply ended; flattened. The new vertical is thoroughly horizontal, either because of digital media or something a hundred times more powerful. We're in the midst of the next stage beyond globalism."





"The desert – expansive, magical, naked, bone-dry. Evoking cinematic memories from thousands of films."

Undefeated] just created a spot for Facebook, *Karaoke*, that was viewed 5.5 million times in the first week of its release. Björn Rühmann is also working consistently in both the US and London markets, while Nick Ball is a new voice in comedy and a new signing to Furlined."

A spirit of digging deeper, making connections and mining for meaning is also evident in Jefferson, a new production company launched under the Furlined banner by McArter last year. Jefferson brings added value, combining different teams in a more nimble, less hierarchical way than is usually seen in regular advertising protocol.

McArter reveals that the work coming out of Jefferson feels remarkably open and honest, and she believes that people respond to honesty and truthfulness like nothing else. "Jefferson is a creative hub that is more than just advertising. It's a humble company that opens up new possibilities, a platform for collaborations between directors, writers, journalists, musicians and more. More and more work is being produced by agencies and clients at the crossroads of culture, commerce and community. We curate teams to collaborate on specific projects. There's a modesty to it, formed with the desire to expand our reach into a new, evolving era of brand communication."

McArter believes that advertising is changing in such a dramatic fashion that something outside the box needs to be invented – before it's too late.

"I started talking to heads of production at various agencies to ask them how much of their work is traditional broadcast," she explains. "Big agencies openly informed me that only 30 per cent of their work is now traditional, so to expand into a new era we need to find new ways of working. That's why Jefferson is here – to invent, create and make it all up as we go along. I think it's the right spirit because it gives us the kind of reach that we wouldn't normally have."

The era of connectivity

Who has been a mentor to McArter over the years? "Ridley Scott is an inspiring, collaborative leader," she answers. "A visionary who saw something in me and gave me an enormous opportunity at a very young age to launch RSA USA. Tony Scott for his passion, Paul Gay for teaching me all about good ad ideas, Dougal Wilson for his values and his expansive, imaginative mind and Will Speck and Josh Gordon for being there on the journey with me, revealing truth through humour and their never-ending quest to champion the underdog in the stories they tell – and in doing so making us all feel a little more human."

Discussing her success on a number of fronts over the last few years, and how the inherent qualities of an ideal leader seem to be more feminine today than ever before, McArter looks

back again at her arrival in Los Angeles in 2000, an event that turned out to be a creative catalyst, starting her on her journey to who she is today. "I often think back to that time of awakening," she muses. "It was reinforced by the good fortune of having been in the business all this time."

"There is a sense of expansiveness and endless possibility in Los Angeles, and in our digital era of connectivity, that matches my own feelings as a woman in the industry."

"It's the increasing popularity and importance of female attributes that a new generation is now responding to," she adds. "Millennials have that mindset today, and here we are in this digital, horizontal era, where connectivity is the hallmark."

In a reflective mood, remembering how she used to feel all those years ago in the industry in New York, she adds "I no longer feel inadequate. Over recent years there has been the continued wakening of so much possibility within me. I feel that using female attributes allows for an authentic leadership style that is better suited for the future of advertising. Coming to Los Angeles has taught me that women no longer have to possess male attributes to be successful."

"I embrace my womanhood. I believe that my vulnerability, empathy, cooperativeness, loyalty, creativity, originality and articulateness are vital to better understand the talent, the brief, the world and the road ahead." **S**

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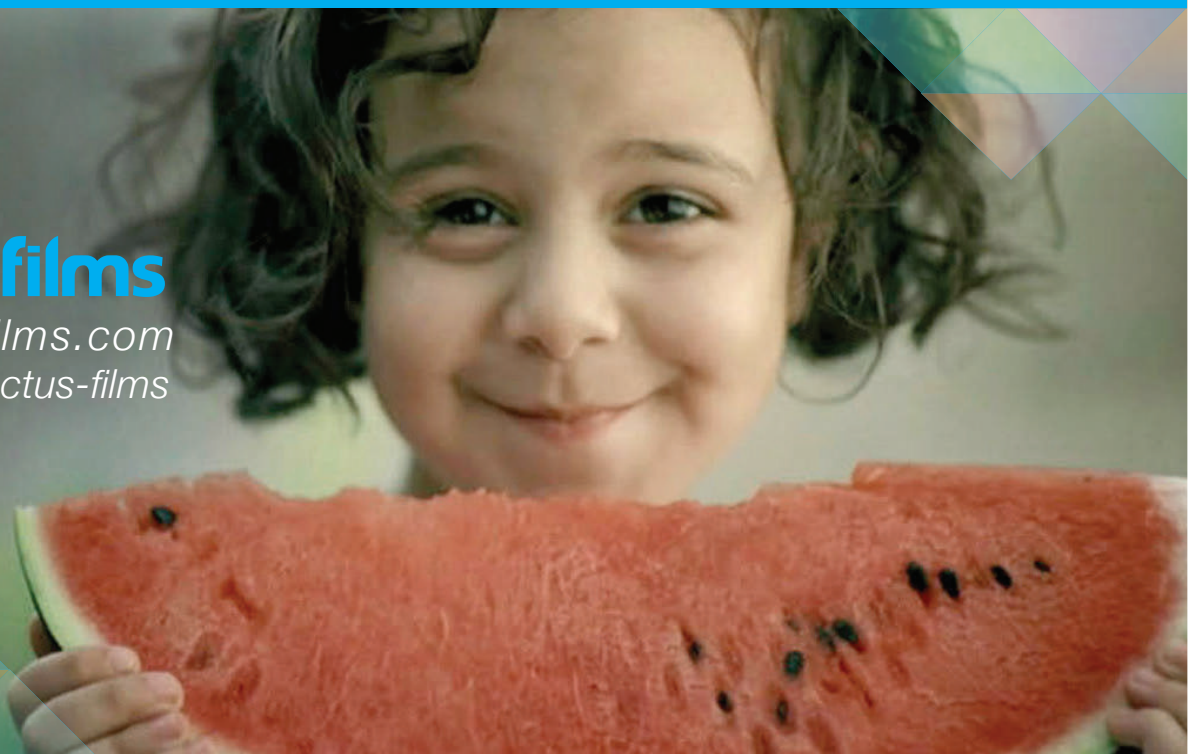
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It's apt that veteran creator of worlds Sir Ridley Scott's latest is a biblical epic. He gives *Iain Blair* the gospel on his ad direction training, embracing-not-abusing the latest tech and his place in a more creative and cosmopolitan new Hollywood

A GOD AND A KING

The colossal grandeur of ancient Egypt. The bloody battlefields of the Crusades. A mysterious alien world in deep space, hundreds of years in the future. The gore and glory of imperial Rome and the spectacle of its doomed gladiators. 1984 and Big Brother. The pastoral glow of vineyards in southern France. The nightmarish vision of a dystopian Los Angeles and its rogue replicants.

These are just a few of the worlds that Ridley Scott has brought to life over the past five decades since making his feature debut with *The Duellists* in 1977. The influential advertising director – his inspired 1984 campaign which launched the Apple Mac still resonates – became one of the supreme stylists of contemporary cinema, as such oft-imitated, seminal works as *Blade Runner*, *Alien*, and *Thelma And Louise* make abundantly clear.

Of all his contemporaries still working today, Scott alone seems to be equally at ease creating vast landscapes set in both the distant past and distant future, in the process channelling David Lean, Cecil B DeMille and James Cameron and demonstrating his own prodigious gifts as an epic storyteller and visual artist. “I love the challenge of creating these new worlds, doing all the research, coming up with the look,” says Scott.

The three-time Oscar nominated director has now turned his attention to the world of the Old Testament prophet Moses, in *Exodus: Gods And Kings*. Based on the Bible's Book of Exodus, the film stars Christian Bale as Moses, backed by a stellar cast including Ben Kingsley and Sigourney Weaver. It also features plagues of frogs and flies and enough visual effects to keep a small army of artists and designers busy for years. Oh and there's a little scene where Scott gets to part the Red Sea.

So it's perhaps an understatement when Scott admits the film “was very ambitious” in terms of recreating a world we know so little about, that existed thousands of years ago. “But then I feel

I'm so experienced, I know exactly what I'm taking on board. And part of the thrill of it was to try and recreate this universe that's set around 5,000 BC. That's the big challenge.”

On reading the first draft of the script, Scott realised he actually knew very little about the Moses story, but the characters themselves, as well as the challenge of trying to recreate a realistic version of Ancient Egypt on screen, really appealed to the veteran director.

And there were plenty of challenges on the shoot on location in Spain, and back in the studio in Pinewood in the UK. The stunning landscapes of Fuerteventura in the Canary Islands were used to stand in for Egypt, and sets were constructed in palm-tree lined valleys in Almeria, Spain.

“The really massive challenge was getting up this almost kilometre-long set, in Almeria, in time to start shooting,” Scott recalls. “We were delayed and suddenly had just 12 weeks to get it done, which is insane when you haven't even broken ground yet! Dealing with all that was the big challenge – getting it up and running.”

To 3D or not to 3D?

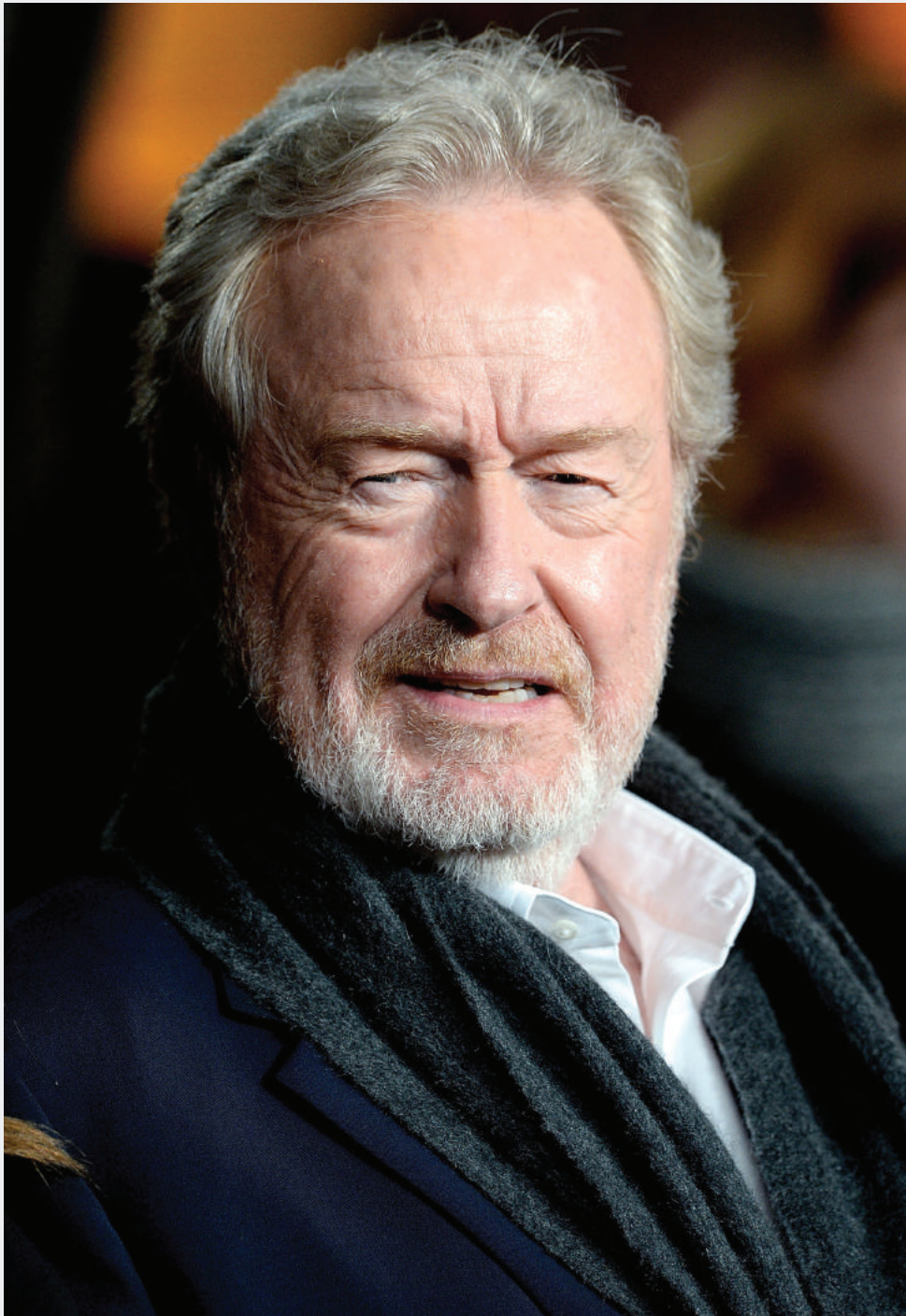
The bloom may be off the 3D rose these days, but Scott “immediately” decided to go 3D for *Exodus*. “I thought it was natural for 3D,” he reports. “We used the 3ality Technica rigs and RED Epic Dragons. I'd had some experience with *Prometheus* and IMAX 3D and I'd worked a lot with [DP] Dariusz Wolski [who shot Scott's upcoming film *The Martian*]. He's a brilliant cinematographer who really understands 3D very well, having done all the *Pirates Of The Caribbean* films. And I know exactly what I want visually, so it's a good match.”

Thanks in part to his career in advertising – “where you get to experiment a lot and try stuff out” – Scott has always embraced the latest technology and effects. Just as he immediately

“I couldn't have clouds talking with God's voice. I have to approach it realistically... We're dealing with a man who's initially an atheist, who gradually edges towards being an agnostic... My approach is, it's always real and natural.”

decided to go 3D, he also “immediately” began to integrate all the VFX – “there's around 1,500 shots, I believe” – with the physical production. “I always do,” he explains. “I edit as we go, which makes life a lot easier. Peter Chiang [Double Negative's visual effects supervisor] is always there on set while I'm shooting, and we'd talk every night, about what effects we needed where and what we expected.”

Born in 1937 in South Shields, Scott exhibited an innate talent for drawing and the visual arts early on. He attended the Royal College of Art in London, with fellow northerner David Hockney and his training there and his work in advertising have always informed his approach: “I learnt to do my own boards early on and I still do a lot of it. I start well before we begin.” Doing the boards



1 Apple, 1984

2 Hovis, Bike Round

who shot *G.I. Jane* and *White Squall* was second unit DP on *1492* and assistant cameraman on *The Duellists*. He also worked on *The Hunger* with Ridley's late brother Tony. "We've had a very long association. Hughie's also an operator, and I like that in a DP because all the magic happens through the viewfinder. I try and operate wherever I can. If I do a small comedy with just two cameras, I'll definitely climb back on."

Learning the trade on the job

How does the director, who turned 77 in November, feel his shooting style has evolved over the years? "Not a lot," he says. "I was 39 when I first started directing movies, and my only regret today is that I didn't start sooner. I arrived with no formal training, other than art direction in TV and 16 years of advertising and commercials."

Scott, who founded his highly successful commercial company RSA with brother Tony back in 1968 (it has offices in London, NYC, LA and Hong Kong), looks back on his commercial career as a crucial part of his preparation for moving into features. "I must have done over 2,000 spots, about 100 a year, and that was film school for me where I learned to light and operate fast, and shoot in every possible set and location." He shot his famous 1974 spot *Bike Round* for Hovis in Shaftesbury, Dorset.

"[Commercials] are a great arena for experimenting and making you really refine your ideas, as you have to tell the story effectively in so little time. It's a good exercise in discipline. That was so valuable as training."

His ad experience taught Scott how to maximise coverage with limited resources. "I'd use just one camera back on films like *The Duellists* because that's all we could afford - one Arri and a backup body," he recalls. "It was a very beautiful film. I got beaten up because of that. But that's

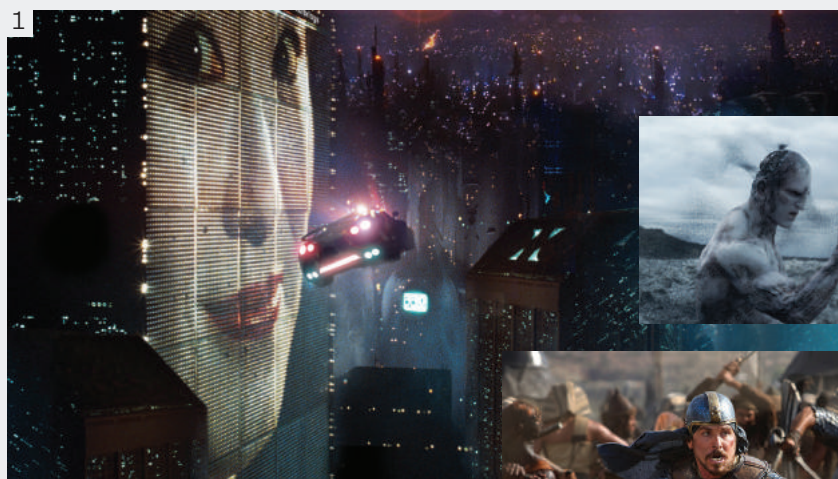
himself, Scott explains, means they're extremely accurate and can be treated like the Bible.

But for *Exodus*, the storyboard bible had to contend with the real thing. Scott, who calls himself an atheist, approached the parting of the Red Sea with intense realism. "There have been so many magical movies the last 15 years. If I see one more talking tree I'm going to leap off a building. So I couldn't have anything like that, or clouds talking with God's voice. I have to approach it realistically. We're dealing with a man who's initially an atheist, who gradually and reluctantly edges towards being an agnostic. It takes a very long time and a lot of events before he starts to question whether these events are controlled or just nature. My approach is, it's always real and natural."

Pulling it off "was very difficult. Just by boarding it, you start to think about all the visual details." Attention to visual detail has always been a driving force for Scott, and he makes no apologies for being "very hands-on" whether shooting a commercial or a big-budget epic. "With DPs I'm involved in everything from stocks to lens choices and lining up a shot," he stresses. "I was a camera operator, and I can't separate myself from that, and I still like to operate."

Scott is a loyal collaborator and likes to work with the same DPs when he can. John Mathieson shot *Kingdom Of Heaven* and *Gladiator* for him: "John's got a great eye for the big stuff, but then he also did *Matchstick Men* which is a far more intimate film and look," he notes. Hugh Johnson,

1

1 *Blade Runner*2 *Prometheus*3 *Kingdom Of Heaven*4 *Exodus: Gods And Kings*5 *Alien*

2



3



4



5



what I feel I bring to all my films, a certain kind of visual beauty, so I shouldn't be ashamed of it.

"*Alien* was one camera. *Blade Runner* was one camera, and the DP Jordan Cronenweth was a total classicist. The structure was very classical and he's one of the greatest DPs I've ever worked with. I began to shift to two cameras on *Legend* and then I realised it made great sense, especially when you do a movie with a lot of dialogue – a great way to capture those magic moments between actors.

"By the time I did *Black Hawk Down* I knew I had to change gear to get that documentary look, and so we used 11 cameras simultaneously. That makes editing a nightmare, of course, but then you have all the material."

Back to the future of sci-fi

Looking back at such pioneering films as *Alien* and *Blade Runner* Scott notes that he "got in fairly early in the genre and to me at least there hadn't been many really good science fiction films then. There was *2001* which to me was the threshold. Before that there were a few I liked, but they were always a bit wobbly on the effects, and I could never get past the lack of reality. It has to be real, and that was the stunning achievement of *2001*, which is probably still one of the best ever made.

"Then *Star Wars* gave me a jolt and woke me up. I loved *Close Encounters*, which I still think is one of the best things Spielberg ever made. *Alien* was my dark side of the moon answer to his optimism. Then I wanted to explore urban sci-fi with *Blade Runner*, and that still works because I didn't go too far into the future. Setting it just around the corner is a lot scarier and more powerful."

Blade Runner, which turned out to be a hugely influential sci-fi classic, with its nightmarish vision of a future-shocked LA, was initially panned and failed to recoup its \$30m budget. "I got such a thrashing that I thought I'd really screwed up,

although in the making of it and editing I knew I'd made a good movie," says Scott. "Looking back, I feel that at that moment in time, the movie was too dark and the visual information was too dense. But then after seven or eight years, I noticed that it started to leak into other movies and into music videos. I'd see the use of rain or some other image and recognise it. Now I'm amused by it."

Alien was his "first real introduction to Hollywood" when he was pointedly "never asked" to direct the sequel. "I thought I'd done quite well and I'd have definitely done '*Alien 2*'. But to be fair, there was a huge management turnover at Fox, and often new people don't want to deal with old business for political reasons, so it sat dormant for 10 years before Jim Cameron came in. And with *Alien* and *Blade Runner* I did sort of feel I'd used up that palette. I'm very eclectic and I don't want to keep repeating myself or the same themes. But I'll definitely do more science fiction."

Indeed, like the Bible and ancient history, sci-fi – despite the box-office disappointment of *Prometheus* – continues to exert its strong gravitational pull on the director. He's currently posting *The Martian*, which he shot in Budapest with Matt Damon and Jessica Chastain at the end of 2014 and which he describes as "a sort of Robinson Crusoe survival story, set in space, five years in the future. And as we just landed on a comet for the first time, reality seems to be catching up more and more with fiction now. Technically, everything that happens in the film is doable now. Dariusz [Wolski, cinematographer] shot it 3D, and as usual we started cutting after just the first week's shoot. Thanks to digital, everything's so much faster now, and I love it."

The digital revolution has been "by far" the biggest change Scott has seen since he started. "It's huge, like the advent of sound in silent film. And as technology changes, then things become,

not so much easier, you have more options – but you've got to be careful you don't overuse and abuse it. CGI's a tool. I don't think it's an end in itself, and I think you can get films that are just driven by tricks and visual effects. My films try to be driven by material and characters."

The man without a plan

What other changes has the director witnessed? "LA's become a far more cosmopolitan city than when I first came here," he notes. "Now you can add great restaurants and great creative energy to the great weather. And the advertising scene has really grown here over the past decade or two. You have a ton of really creative agencies and companies now."

As for Hollywood, the director pronounces it to be "pretty healthy, although the number of huge projects is getting smaller and smaller – just like the screens. And that's a pity. We need some big venues for playing big movies, because I feel you always enjoy a big film far more at a theatre than at home – no matter how good the technology is."

Looking to the future, Scott, who was knighted by the Queen in 2003, shows no signs of slowing down. "People ask me, 'What's your plan?' and the answer is, 'I have no plan,'" he says. "I want to just keep working as hard as I can for as long as I can."

He's not kidding. In fact he seems to be speeding up. In an age when most A-list directors seem to work at a glacial pace, it's telling to note that 12 of Scott's total of 22 feature films have been made since 2000 – an output almost rivalling that of one-movie-a-year Woody Allen (and Scott's features have many more intricate moving parts).

Scott's parting advice to young directors starting out could easily double as his own continuing mission statement: "You've got to have your own vision and take no prisoners. You have to hold out for that vision or you're lost." **S**

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Caviar LA's managing partner/executive producer Michael Sagol and head of integrated/branded content Max Knies tell *Iain Blair* how this international production company is now a stable for shooting stars at the centre of the movie universe

LA GETS A TASTE OF CAVIAR

It's a year since international Belgian production company Caviar threw a big party for the opening of its chic new LA headquarters, "to celebrate Caviar in LA and also show off our fantastic new offices here," as Bert Hamelinck, CEO of the Caviar group of companies, explained at the time. The impressive 17,000 sq ft facility, on Sunset Boulevard in the heart of a newly revitalised Hollywood, occupies a former bank building next door to the ArcLight multiplex and Amoeba Music. It features a mix of open-plan floor space, production facilities, conference rooms and private offices, with a stylish, minimalist décor of poured concrete floors and walls, plenty of distressed stainless steel panels and soaring ceilings.

Caviar's got talent

Since making the move, Caviar, which started in 2006 as a merger of two production companies – Hamelinck's *Roses are Blue* and *Pix and Motion*, owned by Belgian media group Corelio – has both consolidated its various operations and continued to ramp up its busy commercial division.

"We'd burst the seams of our last place, and our film and digital offices both had to move as well, and we needed to be all under one roof," notes Michael Sagol, the managing partner/executive producer who runs Caviar LA. "Now we're trying to bring the best potential creative and creator to a project, and then really collaborate with the changing times – and whether we're fighting over an amazing board, trying to do a crazy low-budget job, follow a crazy approach, or on an insane timeline, it's about trying to have the structure so you can bend to whatever's needed while keeping your vision."

Caviar has a history of grooming visionary new talent, "whether they're known to the advertising world or not," Sagol points out, and in the past year the company has particularly

focused on young talent. "Maybe they've done just a few music videos or commercials, and they've come here, and being under the Caviar banner has really helped propel their career," he says. He cites hot new director Karim Huu Do, who shot the acclaimed, highly stylized and atmospheric, 10-minute music video for Last Night In Paris' EP *Pure*. "His first job for the US is the new branded global campaign for adidas," Sagol reports. "He beat out all his peers. And that just reaffirms what we believe in – being the catalyst for talent," he adds, "and it's so cool that we have a place where younger visionaries can come and spread their wings at a far faster pace." These visionaries include Arnaud Uyttenhove ("doing the Gatorade spot for the World Cup was really amazing") and Keith Schofield (*O2, Be More Dog/IKEA, Carousel*).

He also cites another hot young talent, Hugo Stenson who just started working with Caviar. "And after just two or three jobs (check out his Zoosk spots) he's also ascending pretty quickly," notes Sagol, "so it's fun for us to see that, as we grow, the way we grow is by helping talent. Obviously it's what we do as a production company, but we're very proud of being able to create the next wave of filmmakers."

Moving the millennials

Caviar's eye for new talent isn't just confined to its directors roster. Max Knies, the new head of integrated and branded content, joined the LA office just a few months ago, and says that moving back to California was like a homecoming for him. "I went to school here some 10 years ago, and then moved to New York for seven years where I ran the small boutique production company Greencard Pictures, and produced ads for clients like Google, Stella Artois and NBC." Quite apart from the obvious differences – the weather, LA's

"Whether we're fighting over an amazing board, trying to do a crazy low-budget job, follow a crazy approach, or on an insane timeline, it's about trying to have the structure so you can bend to whatever's needed while keeping your vision."

*Michael Sagol, (left) managing partner/
executive producer and Max Knies,
head of integrated/branded content*



1

1 *adidas, Superstar*2 *Samsung, The Curve Changes Everything*

2



sprawl versus Manhattan's compactness – he notes that the two cities' production approaches are startlingly different: "LA is very systematic and formal, whereas New York's like controlling chaos on a location shoot."

Knies decided to move back to the West Coast after meeting Sagol and fellow managing partner/EP Jasper Thomlinson and talking with them about "the future of commercial work, and how it's been evolving into this branded/integrated world," he recalls. "And almost immediately I realised that Caviar's a place that's really harnessing a lot of this creativity in new media."

"It's not just about the integration between digital and live-action capabilities. The story and how it's selling brands is changing a lot, and what's most interesting to me is the more non-traditional way of selling a brand."

"Commercial work's really changed a lot as a result of how people are ingesting media in general. A lot of the under-25s in our office don't even own TVs. They watch a lot of commercials and content in general on computers, tablets and mobile devices, and that's all changing the way we tell stories and transforming how commercial content's being seen and heard."

He notes that many millennials tend to be "immune" to traditional advertising, "so finding new creative ways to position brands is becoming a big challenge for strategists and creatives at agencies, and a big portion of our roster is really interested in crafting stories and approaching commercials in a more non-traditional way."

Both Knies and Sagol stress that content is king, which is why Caviar produces across all formats – commercials, music videos, TV drama, shorts and feature films – and produces so much. In the future, the aim is to collaborate more with mid-level agencies "that have interesting opportunities to bring in brands in creative ways," says Knies.

Caviar reps about 60 directors worldwide and over 30 from the LA office, which underscores the importance of the operation. "We also live and die a lot by availability," says Sagol, giving Caviar director Rian Johnson as an example. "He did a great Samsung campaign for 72andSunny recently, and now he'll be unavailable till 2019 as he's doing the next two *Star Wars* films. But we love that. It's really fun to have a director like Jonathan Krisel, who had a very successful year doing commercials, and now in the fall he's going to be doing this new TV project called *Baskets* with Zach Galifianakis and Louis CK. We have nothing to do with the show, but it's really cool for us as he's obviously right at the epicentre of what comedy is now."

The future's in features

As this town is the de facto centre of gravity for filmmakers all over the world, it's not surprising that Caviar, which co-produced Lars Von Trier's *Nymphomaniac Vol 1&2*, also plans to ramp up its LA film production arm.

"Caviar LA produced its first feature last year, called *The Diary Of A Teenage Girl*, based on the graphic novel of the same name, and it's been accepted at Sundance," reports Sagol.

"It was directed by Marielle Heller, who's not a commercials director yet – but now I think she will be, and I'm really looking forward to breaking her in this world. We've made maybe 15 movies in Europe, but that's another reason for the move to Hollywood, to put it all under one roof and take it to the next level."

There's one more reason for Caviar to celebrate its new LA lease of life.

"We do so much bi-coastal work, and I try not to mention the great weather here on a call, when it's 40-degrees warmer than New York," admits Knies, only half-joking. **S**

"A lot of the under-25s in our office don't even own TVs. They watch a lot of commercials and content in general on computers, tablets and mobile devices, and that's all changing the way we tell stories and transforming how commercial content's being seen and heard."

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Clay Weiner, director, Biscuit Filmworks and OJ Simpson trial fan, suggests drinks with salty barflies, chowing on chili dogs and supping coconut water in the City of Collagen

GOING NATIVE: LOS ANGELES

What is the best thing about working in advertising in LA?

Everyone drinks coconut water cos there's a drought.

What is the worst thing about working in advertising in LA?

You never know when there will be an earthquake.

If you're booking a hotel in LA where would you choose to stay?

On my dime? The motel above the old White Horse on Western. The White Horse was a bar that looked like a cross between where we held my 9-year-old birthday party and the green room of the Comedy Store. There's a Super 8 motel above it that offers weekly and monthly rates. If you're writing a script and need more characters this is where you should stay.

Where's the best place to eat in LA?

Chili John's, technically in Burbank.

Where's the best place to drink in LA?

The HMS Bounty – it has better regulars than Cheers and the TVs are both a proper 17 inches. Chez Jay – they pour stiff ones and the staff are saltier than the Pacific. Magic Castle – because, duh, the magic. And, if you forget to bring a sports jacket you get to look fly in a borrowed Arfani.

Who do you/would you love to work with in the industry?

The two Genes: Wilder and Hackman. Recently, I tried to get both of them for a feature I've written and when I heard back that neither of them were doing well I cried.

If LA were a product what would it be?

Silicone, collagen, Restylane.

What do you miss when you're out of the city?

When I'm in LA I miss NYC, when I'm in NYC I miss LA. It's like that Neil Diamond song.

What advice would you give to a visitor?

Don't take the subway.

What's LA's favourite pastime?

Used to be reading paperbacks at the beach. Now it's txts in traffic.

One table, four places, you and who?

Steve Martin. Bill Murray. Sacha Baron Cohen.

What is the best US ad you have seen in the last year?

Old Spice *Momsong*. Moms singing like Meatloaf makes me weak in the knees. I like the strategy as much as the execution. And the lyrics are heartbreakingly emotional. If it were me, I think I would have gone more Steve Perry, *Oh Sherrie* or Linda Ronstadt, *Long Long Time*. Those are two of my own mom's favourites.


What's your favourite memory of LA?

Is it inappropriate to say the OJ Simpson trial? If so, the OJ Simpson trial.

What's your one-line life philosophy?

Exceed your own expectations.

If you could have one question answered what would it be?

Did Adnan do it? 



1 Coconut water

2 Old Spice Momsong

3 Earthquakes in LA

4 Sacha Baron Cohen

5 Gene Wilder in *Young Frankenstein*

6 Eat at Chili John's

7 Drink at HMS Bounty



4



6



2



7



5

"When I'm in LA I miss NYC, when I'm in NYC I miss LA. It's like that Neil Diamond song."



THE WAY I SEE IT

Johnnie Frankel

Johnnie Frankel doesn't sleep much, but that gives him more time to watch TV box sets and think about work. As president of multi award-winning production company Rattling Stick, which he co-founded with Ringan Ledwidge and Daniel Kleinman, he's rather busy. Still producing for Kleinman, he's worked on such triumphs as the Cannes Grand Prix-winning Guinness *noitulovE*. Before that he was busy working at RSA, Paul Weiland's, Blink and, even earlier, as a tennis coach in Durham. He talks candidly to *Carol Cooper* about being unbusy at school, Ledwidge's controversial Christmas ad for Sainsbury's, the importance of being nice and his musings on his manhood...



“If I wasn’t a producer... I would be a triangalist.”

I was born 7 April 1964, in Battersea, South London, and for the first 10 years of my life lived right by Battersea Park.

My earliest memory is from when I was about five. My mum gave me a glass of orange juice because I had a bad tummy ache (not sure how the juice would have helped, but hey, this was the 60s). I drank the juice and then threw it straight back up over my mum. She called the doctor who took one look at me and whizzed me off to hospital. Turned out I had a burst appendix (the doctor wasn’t sure I would make it).

My dad was a dentist until he was about 55 when he switched careers and became a restaurateur (that’s a long story). My mum was an admin officer at the French Lycée in South Kensington. I was one of four children – an older sister and two younger brothers. As the oldest boy my position within the pack was pretty strong.

I don’t remember a huge amount about my childhood, but my parents assure me that I was a very happy child who didn’t cry or make a fuss – which is weird because now I cry at pretty much any available opportunity, I’ll come to that later.

I had my one and only fight walking back from school one day with a friend who got picked on by two boys. I went to help him and got a shoeing from the two kids. My mate fucked off and left me. I learnt a valuable lesson that day: if a friend is getting picked on, pretend not to notice and jog on.

When I was 10 we moved from Battersea to just off Kensington High Street. Kensington Market (now a PC World) was my main hangout as a teenager – it provided an excellent, diverse social education. School was a mixed bag: Hill House for a year (rust-coloured knickerbockers, gold-coloured T-shirt and jumper with a gold/brown cravat – a strong look for an 11 year old). On to a Surrey boarding school for a year, no idea why my parents thought that was a good idea, as it wasn’t. And then City of London from 13 to 17. Holidays were spent in a Wiltshire holiday cottage. We didn’t travel to sexy world destinations like we do today, but it was great.

I had no aspirations or ambition as a child. I very much lived in the present, and still do. When I was at school I didn’t even know there was such a thing as a producer or director or production companies or even an advertising industry (I think the careers advisor forgot to mention any of those as choices), so when I left aged 17, I was a bit lost.

I’ve had a couple of nicknames: Rubber Johnnie at school, I still laugh about that one; and then later in life, Johnnie Romance, which I may have come up with myself – it stuck and didn’t do me much harm!

I didn’t really like school (the learning bit anyway). I wasn’t stupid, but I was lazy. I didn’t put the effort in and, as I found out later in life, putting the effort in is pretty essential. I only scraped two O-levels and was asked not to come back to do A-levels. That was like being expelled, only slightly less edgy.

As a punishment for my failure, my parents sent me off to southern Spain to take part in a student/tennis program. It was amazing. I re-took and passed my O-levels and also passed a tennis-coaching exam. I then went to work at a tennis centre in North East England, helping to run the place and teach tennis to juniors.

Thanks to my dad’s dental nurse, Rosie, I leapt from working as a tennis coach to working in film as projectionist and dubbing mixer. Rosie’s friend Lyn managed Cine-Lingual Sound Studios in Soho and was looking for an assistant. In my interview Lyn asked me if I knew what a dubbing studio did and I said, “Is it like when they sing on *Top Of The Pops* but they aren’t really singing?” She said that was close enough and gave me the job.

When I was working at Twickenham Sound Studios as a second assistant dubbing mixer I got to meet some pretty amazing people: Richard Attenborough (hands down the nicest man that I ever had the good fortune to work with); Franco Zeffirelli (hands down the most sensitive man I ever had the good fortune to work with); Bernardo Bertolucci, Mel Gibson, John Cleese and a mad

American/Belgian yogic director called Armondo Linus Acosta, who directed a film version of *Romeo And Juliet* that was played entirely by feral cats, except for John Hurt, who played a crazy bag lady – true story.

I ended up working on commercials when I found out a friend who was an editor at Daniels Garland Walter, which specialised in the editing of commercials, needed an assistant. After a job interview involving four pints and a slap-up meal at the Rasa Sayang he gave me the job.

I have nothing but incredibly fond memories of everywhere I have worked. I went from DGW to RSA, which was an amazing training ground. Back then, in the 90s, it was run by Jo Godman who was notorious for being a hard taskmaster, but if you did your job well you were well looked after. I knew virtually nothing about production but had a brilliant, patient teacher in Pauline Hurst, the best producer I have ever known. Moving from there to Paul Weiland’s (after a brief stint working at my dad’s restaurants) I had Mary Francis as my boss, another hard taskmaster but very much in the same vein as Jo Godman. These were two of the best training grounds for production, so to have back-to-back jobs at both was unbelievable.

In the early days of my career, I was very very driven, very keen to succeed. I genuinely enjoyed my job so much that it was easy to work hard. (‘Work hard, play hard’ was Jo Godman’s motto. I followed it like a religion – still do.)

If I wasn’t a producer and could be equally successful in another profession I would be a triangalist (the person who plays the triangle in a massive orchestra).

The best piece of advertising work I’ve seen is John West Salmon *Bear*. Annoyingly, Danny [Kleinman] directed it before I joined him, but when I got offered the job I thought I can’t believe I am going to be producing for the bloke who directed that ad!

I have been involved with many amazing projects in my career, but if I had to pick a favourite I think it would be Guinness *noitulovE*. It’s an amazing demonstration of how a really simple idea, brilliantly executed, can produce a stunning end product. Up until the last month of the production (it took around a year to make) we were using a track by Groove Armada called *Purple Haze*. Then someone suggested we look at some alternative music and Peter Raeburn at Soundtree Music came up with *Rhythm Of Life* and said he could make it work if he had a bit of time to edit the track and fit it to the pictures. The rest is history. There is no denying the significant impact that track had on the ad and it shows how important the right music can be.



“The worst thing you can do is produce an ad that no one has anything to say about.”

I think the most significant change that has affected the ad industry since the 90s is the way in which brands can now advertise. When I started there was TV or cinema, posters or print. That was pretty much it. The internet has changed our lives irreversibly and clients now want to use every available platform to reach as many as possible.

When I left Blink [producing for Dominic Murphy] to join Spectre in 2001, one of the reasons – apart from the fantastic opportunity of working with Daniel Kleinman – was to cut down on the foreign travel, as my first child, Molly, had been born. Working with Dominic was amazing, but we were both young(ish) and relatively free to do what we wanted. This meant long shoots abroad and that was going to be hard to maintain with a wife and baby at home. I was also looking for a bit of stability in my life.

When Rattling Stick launched in 2006 we decided we wanted to keep the company small, with the quality big. We have 14 directors now and a key consideration for us is our ability to nurture and build their careers. We are all very closely involved with each director and that takes a huge amount of time so we all think very carefully before taking on anyone new. We’ve made some very difficult decisions and had to pass on some great talent in the past. But between Katie [Keith, ‘First Lady’], Andy Orrick (our ‘Chief of Stuff’) and myself, we do look at every reel sent to us.

The controversy surrounding Sainsbury’s *Christmas Is For Sharing* is a good thing in my opinion. The worst thing you can do is produce an ad that no one has anything to say about. It’s much better to court debate (especially on the sort of scale that this ad has) than to leave people

with nothing to say. It’s stimulated conversation around the moral limits of advertising, but equally it has helped engage a whole new generation of *Gogglebox-X-Factor* viewers in the narrative of the war – just read Twitter! We had no end of emails from schools who wanted more information or to use the film in lessons and assemblies.

When I read *The Guardian’s* criticism of the ad [“The film-makers here have done something to the First World War which is perhaps the most dangerous and disrespectful act of all: they have made it beautiful.”] it did send a shiver down my spine. However, on further reflection, I don’t agree. It’s a closing statement designed to shock and while the ad is beautifully crafted, I don’t come away with the feeling that WW1 was beautiful and I don’t think many others do either, but bravo to the journalist for writing a cracking end line. ▣



“Be nice and you will find people will go the extra mile.”

My feeling is that complaints about the

Christmas Is For Sharing ad could have been fuelled by some of the media's slightly cynical view of supermarket brands. I think consumers on the whole liked the ad. On YouTube (which we know never lies) the 'likes' are around 88,000 to just under 3,000 dislikes. The media needs to generate stories for people to read. Writing “I think the Sainsbury's Christmas ad is jolly good” is not a great line. Whereas, “Sainsbury's kidnap WW1 for their own evil gain” is far more likely to create a buzz. It's the journalists' job and they are very good at it. Ultimately it goes back to creating a controversial piece of work that hopefully stimulates interesting debate, and this ad did that in spades.

Creatively, 2014 was fantastic at Rattling Stick.

We were runners-up to Academy as *Campaign's* Production Company of the Year and at Christmas we had Andy McLeod's #WinChristmas for Mulberry, Ringan's Sainsbury's, Ivan Bird's *Walk Through* for Sky Movies, David Edward's *Found It* for Debenhams and Pete Riski's *Let It Go* for Vodafone, which all did really well. Financially it is tough out there. Budgets are shrinking and clients are wanting more for their buck than ever. I think one of the reasons why we have done well is that as a small company with small overheads, none of our directors are pressured into doing work they don't find creatively stimulating. They get to pick and choose with very little pressure from above which can only be a good thing. Also it doesn't hurt that our core philosophy is to always

try and work hard, be nice, collaborate wherever possible and not just focus on the bottom line (but then I would say that, wouldn't I?)

Awards matter if you win and don't if you

don't. Of course it is nice to win an award, and particularly when you get Production Company of the Year [as Rattling Stick was voted by *Campaign* in 2013, British Arrows in 2012], as this is less about one person and more about a company. What is interesting to me is how the work is viewed and perceived and how much debate it stimulates, not whether a jury of your peers feel it is worthy of their seal of approval.

Radiator was Rattling Stick's first feature.

When Danny's friend Mel Agace came to us with the script, we loved it and felt privileged to be asked to help. Features are something that we want to continue to develop at RS. It was a nice surprise to find out that Barbara Broccoli was involved, as we know her well from the Bond titles that Danny has done for the past 20 years.

In terms of brands I'd like to work on, Volvo

Trucks comes to mind. Van Damme's *Epic Split* is one of my all-time favourites.

If I name the directors I would like to work

with, will their MDs think I am trying to send out a message? Good. Dougal Wilson, Tim Godsall, Chris Palmer, Frank Budgen and Steven Spielberg.

I'm obsessed with TV. The first box set I ever

bought was *The West Wing*. It was when I was in Australia shooting Johnnie Walker *Fish*. I'd go to bed and within an hour or two (due to brutal jet lag) be wide awake. I saw the entire series on that trip and was hooked. These days I mostly like crime, specifically Scandinavian crime – *The Killing*, *The Bridge*, *Wallander* are all good, as are the French shows *Braquo* and *Spiral*. But they can get a bit dark so I like to sprinkle a bit of humour in there, too – *30 Rock*, *Modern Family*, *Community* and *Arrested Development*. Also a special mention to [UK TV series] *Peaky Blinders*, which is trying to show the Americans we can do period TV that isn't as mundane as *Downton Abbey*. And it has splendid suits, too!

There are two excellent pieces of advice I

have been given: never say no (unless it's to your 10-year-old daughter asking for her 21st [chocolate] After Eight in under five minutes); and be nice. It costs nothing to be nice and you will find people will go the extra mile if you are.

I would advise anyone with aspirations to

work as a producer that the most important thing is your work ethic. If you are the first in and last out and spend your day trying to help others you will go far. Enthusiasm is also key. If you don't love what you do, find something else.

The worst day of my career was shooting

an Olympus ad with Frank Budgen that starred Naomi Campbell. I had only just started producing and was completely out of my depth. Frank's day tends to start at around 5pm and Naomi Campbell tends to turn up when she likes and is not what I would call a team player. The result was a horrific shoot that very nearly took me out of the industry.

The best day of my career was perhaps when

Richard Attenborough took my face in his hands and told me not to worry when my name didn't appear on the rough end credit sequence on the film *Cry Freedom* and that it would definitely be there for the finished version. I went to see it with my family and when the credit came up it read 'assistant dubbing mixer – Jonathan Frankel'. It was possibly the longest credit in cinema history and took up pretty much the whole screen.

I think achieving both artistic merit and

success for the brand are equally important. Everyone wants to make an ad that receives creative accolades, but there is also a huge amount of satisfaction to be had from knowing that you helped create a positive vibe around a specific brand. If you treat your audience as humans rather than consumers, which great advertising always has, then everyone wins.

I manage a balance between work and family

life very badly. If I spend too much time at work then I feel guilty that I am neglecting my family and vice versa.

My biggest fear is that my kids [aged 10 and 13]

will never leave home.

I last cried when (spoiler alert) the monkey

died in the film *Night At The Museum 3*. My family take a huge amount of joy over the fact that I basically cry at everything.

My greatest weakness is consuming a Wispa

bar and bottle of pinot noir in front of *River Monsters* [wildlife documentary series]. It's also my idea of heaven.

The closest I've ever been to death was the

aforementioned burst appendix. Also, at the end of my first term at my school in Spain when I was 17. We went out and played drinking games and on the way home I fell asleep while driving my motorbike. I drove off the edge of the road and came to in a dry riverbed under a bridge. Another yard or two and I would have hit the bridge and that would not have ended well.

I Googled myself a while back, can't remember

why, and found that a picture that I had completely forgotten about (of me) had made it on to the ginger beard coalition website, amazing.



“I would love to look back on my life and think that I did everything as well as I could – that would be my ambition.”

The best day of my personal life was the day

I married my wife Samantha. The worst was the day my friend Piers died. I used to go fishing with him and since he died I haven't been as much. When I do go, I think of him – a positive thing as my memories are many and fond.

My heroes are Didier Drogba, Frank Lampard, Franco Zola and Jeremy Wade [the presenter of *River Monsters*].

If I could time travel I would travel to the roaring 20s. It looks like fun and I love the clothes the men wore then.

I have pondered long and hard about what makes me the most angry and after lying in bed all last night unable to sleep, I think the answer is insomnia.

I do care what people think about me, because

I don't like the idea of people not liking me – who does? But then again there is no way in the world that everyone is going to like me, so to those who don't, fuck you.

If I was the UK prime minister for a day I would breakfast at The Wolseley [café on Piccadilly], lunch at Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons [Raymond Blanc's Oxford eaterie] and dine at The Fat Duck [Heston Blumenthal's Berkshire restaurant].

I am not particularly ambitious. I would love to look back on my life and think that I did everything as well as I could – that would be my ambition.


I would like to be remembered as loud, gregarious, funny, irreverent, kind.

Am I an introvert or an extrovert?

Introvert.

If I could change one thing about myself –

I'd really like a smaller willy.

At the end of the day, what really matters is family. Before Christmas I was away working in the US. Schedule changes and bad weather made it unlikely I'd be back in time for my ten-year-old daughter Scarlett's dance show. I did everything to try to get home and with a huge effort involving many people I made it straight from the airport to the show just as her dance started. It was a miracle. Neither Scarlett or Molly (my older daughter) knew I was going to be there and the looks on their faces when they saw me will stay with me forever. If you could bottle that and put it on a shelf I would love to make the ad to help sell it. 

BECOMING THE PERFECT GUEST

Despite a childhood spent in sound studios, and formative working years spent in a record store, it seems Final Cut editor Joe Guest was destined to work in moving image from an early age, starting out as a precocious teenage film projectionist. The award-winning editor tells *Ryan Watson* how he started at the birth of digital editing and got in with leading directors, cutting everything from their first music videos to today's top Lion-bagging spots



Returning from the shoot for this feature, Final Cut editor Joe Guest jovially confesses his relief at not getting arrested. After all, a man brandishing a chainsaw in the woods would usually be a cause for concern, but on this occasion it's a celebration of a prolific year cutting some of the top commercials of 2014.

Having made the *shots Awards* 2014 Editor of the Year shortlist for work including campaigns for Cadbury, John Lewis and Smirnoff, and winning the Best Editing gold at the British Arrows Craft Awards in November for Lurpak *Adventure Awaits*, it's clear the editor, whose career spans more than two decades, is in the middle of something of a peak period.

Growing up in the business

At 17, Guest couldn't wait to get started in the business. He lied about his age to get a job as a projectionist at his local cinema in Selborne, the Hampshire town he and his parents had left for London three years earlier. It would prove to be a step in the right direction, and he returned to the capital in 1991 to work as a runner at a company called AV Department.

"It was a small building opposite Black Market Records [in Soho]," Guest recalls. "I spent most of my time at work in the basement at Black Market listening to drum and bass."

Sound had played a big part in Guest's life up to that point – his mother was a voiceover actress and he'd spent a lot of his childhood hanging around at various sound studios. Naturally, this rubbed off on him and he began to believe he was destined to work in the medium too, in some way.

"When I started the job at AV I thought I was going to be doing sound, but I'd been there only about a year when the editing software Avid

"I was really into computers so I took to it [Avid] and helped set it up. They didn't really have an editor so I just sort of taught myself in the evenings and hung out. I wanted to do everything that came through the door."

came out. I was really into computers so I took to it and helped set it up. They didn't really have an editor so I just sort of taught myself in the evenings and hung out. I wanted to do everything that came through the door."

What came through the door were the first music video projects from the likes of Dougal Wilson and Si & Ad, directors who've remained loyal to Guest to this day. "We've all grown up together, really," muses the editor.

Another important figure in Guest's development was Rick Russell, the founder editor and CEO at Final Cut, whom he'd also met during his time at AV Department. The pair kept in touch before being reunited at Russell's London editing house years later.

"I moved to Final Cut in 2001," Guest remembers. "I'd been editing for nearly 10 years by that point so I went there with the hope of getting some commercials and maybe doing more music videos. Then *Street Music* for BBC 1Xtra happened [directed by Nick Gordon]; that was a big one that blew me up quite a bit."

"What was great about music videos was that we were kind of left to our own devices and with commercials you've got so many people: the director, CDs, the ECDs... and that's before the client's even seen it."

Asked whether he thinks there's such a career-defining moment for every editor, Guest replies "Definitely. There's always that one job, one director or something that basically gets your foot in the door. Then you meet people and that's how it works."

Although he confesses that the art and freedom of music videos will always remain his first love, there's

no denying Guest's passion for storytelling, even if, in his advertising work, it has to make its way through many more opinions and tiers of decision-making before it sees the light of day.

"What was great about music videos was that we were kind of left to our own devices and obviously with commercials you've got so many people: the director, CDs, the ECDs... and that's before the client's even seen it. I don't enjoy that as much as I used to enjoy music videos when you basically presented something, they said it was amazing and then you saw it on TV."

The joy of responsibility

With today's faster deadlines and even more layers of feedback, it's hardly surprising that Guest prefers to visit the set whenever he can to ensure a seamless understanding of the job at hand.

"I think it really helps if you aren't just coming into it blind. It makes it very different when you turn up on a Monday and all your rushes are there and you've never seen anything other than a treatment. I like being part of the production. It's great fun to have a laptop there next to the director with a live feed. Having a bit of responsibility on a shoot is always good fun."

With a beautifully-crafted spot for IKEA, *The Joy of Storage*, released in early 2015 (see page 8) and having started the year working into the early hours, it doesn't appear that Guest will be letting up any time soon. **S**

MEL EXON MD BBH London, co-founder BBH Labs

FAVOURITE KIT

1 Canon EOS 5D Mark II camera

Every major moment in my immediate family's life is somewhere on this camera. Okay, not quite every moment, but it's close. It's a brilliant bit of kit: when we got this camera my woeful photographic skills were transformed and it's easy to use. On any trip it's earned the right to be packed alongside my infinitely smaller smartphone.

2 Coloured cork notebook by Nomess

I think anyone who likes a good pen tends to like a good notebook too. I will buy anything by Hay, but my current favourite is this coloured cork notebook by Nomess. Its cover has a lovely tactile value, but my pen loves the paper inside even more. The fact several pages are perforated on the bound side of the book also makes ripping a page out a satisfyingly elegant act.

3 Parker 51

I love the very old and the very new. My fountain pen is definitely an example of the former. It's a perfect piece of industrial design, the best fountain pen ever made. '51' refers to the company's 51st year, it was actually designed in 1939. Mine was a wedding present from my husband who knows me better than anyone. Inexpensive, sleek and simple, this pen is very elderly, but still writes beautifully. Just don't take it on a plane.

Apps etc



Kindle iPad app

Not a profound or original comment, but it's still quietly and consistently life-changing to lose yourself in a great book just a few seconds after hearing about it.



VSCOcam

Very slick, very beautiful photo app. Next-level Instagram, definitely better for discovery #VSCOcam



Toca Boca

The only developer to consistently create games both my daughters (five and eight years old) love playing that aren't battery acid for the soul. A hard balance to strike.



Sublime Text

Nice interface and generally easy to use if, like me, you don't hold a computer science degree and write code for a living every day.

goo.gl url shortener (Chrome extension)
Over the years it must have saved me aeons of time and it never fails.

4 Burberry parka

This coat qualifies as essential kit in my world. It's a wearable Tardis. Fully removable lining and hood, massive pockets that can fit a mini iPad and a B5 notebook, not to mention random kids' snacks for every eventuality. And it feels okay to wear walking to work, to the playground or into a bar.

5 23andme.com

I was the lucky recipient of a Wired conference ticket last year where the kits were being handed out for free, so gave this a go. The recent, slightly creepy TV ads aside, it's been genuinely enlightening and sobering in equal measure to discover the health traits I've inherited and where my DNA tells me I'm really from. It turns out I'm 2.8 per cent Neanderthal, marginally higher than the average 23andme.com subscriber. Nice.

Norma Jeane Mortenson

You know what i mean

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GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Since 2004, German film school Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg's annual Porsche Awards has championed the finest emerging filmmaking talent, not just nationally, but from all over the world. A strong, longstanding relationship with the eponymous car manufacturer, along with an esteemed panel of jury members, has kept the competition going strong over the years and 2014 saw yet another horde of top-class entries.

Traditionally, three monetary prizes – €3,911 (first prize), €2,911 (second prize), and €1,911 (third prize); amounts that commemorate the classic Porsche 911 – are awarded in the first category for traditional spots up to 90 seconds and a second category, the New Ways Award, for formats such as campaigns, branded entertainment, mobile productions or trailers, offers a prize of €2,356.

Additionally, an award of €911 is given to the winner of a Special Prize and last year saw the introduction of a new Automobile category, with a €3,918 prize.

"Given the available resources of the young directors, the quality, again, was amazing!" says Robert Ader, director of marketing communications at Porsche Germany. "Not only regarding the execution, but also concerning the stories and content. We highly appreciated the large number of international entries, which amounted to more than 50 per cent."

Ader adds "Our sponsorship of the Porsche Awards is a long-term investment to get in contact with the creative young people of the film industry."

This year saw six very different films pick up a coveted 'slingshot' award along with the respective cash prize for their category. Here we look at the winning entries with insight from the filmmakers behind them. ▣

For 11 years the Porsche Awards has picked out the cream of student commercial directors, rewarding innovation, style and talent. *Ryan Watson* surveys the 2014 competition winners, revealing the stories behind these promising young storytellers and their prizewinning spots

Andreas Bruns

FIRST PRIZE



German, aged 32
Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, diploma year
Representation Driven By Creatives (Germany)

This isn't the first time director Andreas Bruns has appeared in *shots* as a winner of a Porsche Award. In 2013, the talented filmmaker and German native won the Automobile category with his entry, *The Journey*, for Mercedes-Benz. This time around, he's upped the ante by winning the judges over with a cinematic spot for soap brand LUX.

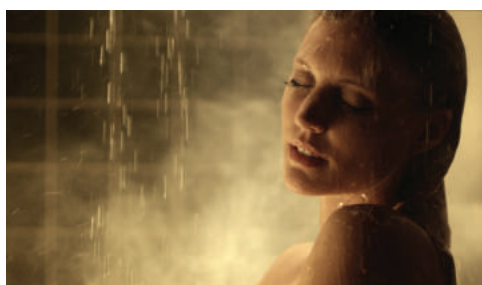
Bruns, a student at the Filmakademie since 2009, now in his final year at the school, is as humble as ever about his latest triumph.

"Especially after sitting there in front of the big screen watching so many great talents from all over the world, I feel totally honoured to have won the Porsche Award," he says about the thrill of collecting top prize at the latest ceremony in Ludwigsburg.

Based on a "keep it short and simple" horror theme, the spot is extremely well executed and to the point.

The film places a beautiful woman in a dark, isolated country mansion on a rainy night. Cutting to a road leading up to the house, a scary villain with a chainsaw is introduced to the scene. According to Bruns, the rest is a no-brainer, but the idea was an interesting fit for a soap product.

"It was great to combine the horror genre with a soap brand – two things that at first sight have absolutely nothing in common," he explains. "Letting them clash with our slogan, 'save your skin', was definitely a fun thing to play with."



"It was great to combine the horror genre with a soap brand – two things that at first sight have absolutely nothing in common."

Bruns reveals that, as a fan of the horror genre, he didn't need to carry out much research into the subject.

"For me it was just really great to put an ironic twist on all those well-known scenes of this genre." Scouting a location wasn't a problem either; he'd already considered the American-style house for another project before the LUX script came about. The typical horror feel is made more genuine with the use of a 1950s theme and the decade tied in with the brand's history nicely.

"Those were the good old days when not just LUX but also B-movies had their biggest successes and well-known actresses like Doris Day, Grace Kelly and Audrey Hepburn became the face of the brand."

As for the characters in *Save Your Skin*, it was important to find polar opposites to represent the good and the bad to make the story as convincing as the production.

"The most important thing was to find a person who was capable of setting the sensation of pure evil from the first moment," explains Bruns. "Luckily, with Hagen Oechsel, we found the perfect match for this role. And, of course, we were pretty happy with Amo Völker representing the innocent beauty."



Dan Neeson

SECOND PRIZE



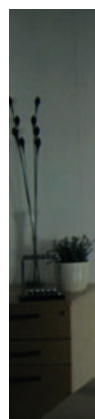
Australian, aged 30
National Film and Television School, 2012-2014
Representation Unsigned

Aussie director Dan Neeson's film *Once She Was Just Like You* is over before you know it. But don't let that put you off, because so much happens in the 30-second spot that you'll want to watch it again and again.

Introducing a female protagonist who sits still in front of the camera, the spot documents her life as it tragically unravels around her. The piece is a technical masterpiece and is a real testament to Neeson's education in special effects at the UK's National Film and Television School (NTFS).

"There were literally hundreds of technical challenges to overcome on this shoot," reveals Neeson. "We decided to shoot stop-motion using a real actor and life-size props, as we felt this would lend a sense of tangibility and realism. One of the main challenges we faced was figuring out how to shoot 750 frames of continual animation in just three days."

For most of that time, Claire Bond, the actress who plays the woman in the film, found herself sitting still in a chair transfixed to the camera lens. "Our actress had to stay very still during photography," reveals Neeson. "However, for obvious reasons, she still needed to be able to get up and out of her seat, so we designed a chair with a positioning marker that rested on the back of her neck. Every time she sat back down, she lined her skull up against our marker and positioned the rest of her body from there."





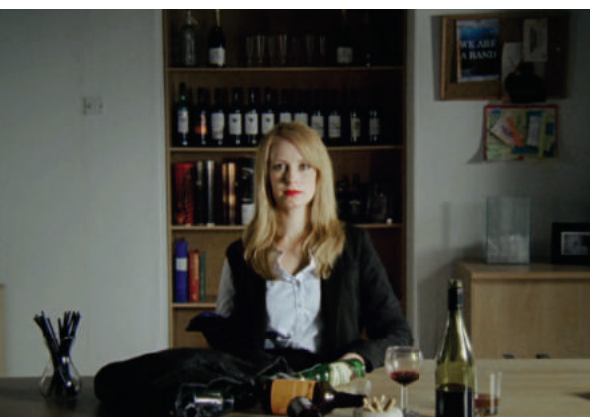
“We somehow convinced ourselves that it would be possible to shoot a highly complex 750-frame story over the course of two-and-a-half days.”

The key to the film’s concept was to think of homelessness as a process and Neeson points out that it can happen over months, years and even a lifetime, which his film depicts.

“The camera stays connected to the eyes of our character. I didn’t want to cut away from that connection for our scene changes, so we worked out that we could do the whole story in a single take if the set, lights, props and costume physically moved around her.”

He continues: “There must have been a lot of good coffee that day because we somehow convinced ourselves that it would be possible to shoot a highly complex 750-frame story about a young professional’s journey through depression, alcoholism, joblessness, abuse, divorce and abandonment over the course of two-and-a-half days.”

Once She Was Just Like You won Best Overall and Best in Brief at the Nahemi/Kodak Student Commercial Awards in 2014 but taking the second prize at the Porsche Awards came as a surprise to its director: “To be shortlisted was compliment enough. I never expected to win anything at the Porsche Awards and certainly not the silver slingshot. I met some incredibly talented people, got some fantastic advice, made friends and drank German beer.”



Sandin Puce

THIRD PRIZE



Bosnian, aged 29

Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, diploma year

Representation Driven By Creatives, element-e, Fox Devil Films (Germany), Rocket Film (Switzerland), Smooth-Prod (France)



You can’t just pluck ideas out of the sky. Or can you? It was when Bosnian director Sandin Puce stepped out onto a roof for air that he came up with the concept for his third-prize-winning spot *Take Your Stage*.

“I discovered a small bucket 30m below on the ground,” Puce recalls. “I stepped to the edge of the roof and asked myself: ‘If I was to jump now – could I hit the bucket?’ The moment caused my knees to tremble and one thought after another went through my head. At the end, the whole movie was there.”

Created with adidas in mind, the piece is one of two that Puce worked on for his diploma while studying at the Filmakademie.

The spot opens on a young girl sizing up a jump from the top of a building. The scene initially causes concern, but before long it emerges that she’s actually a competitive diver and is simply preparing for her next big plunge into the pool.

“The actress is my niece and comes from Bosnia and Herzegovina,” Puce adds. “She started doing gymnastics at three years old and at six began ballet. Because of that training she has a great awareness of her body and an enormous discipline.”

During the award judging sessions, the jury was impressed with Puce’s courage to face the tough transitional point of his film, when the scene switches from a mundane residential estate to a diving arena full of fans.



“I love it when technical aspects merge with pure reality. To me this always creates something magical. I call it film, dream, illusion.”

The director chose to approach the task with a brave technique that tackles the challenge head on, allowing for a seamless transitional shot instead of cutting away.

“I love it when technical aspects merge with pure reality,” says Puce of the scene.

“To me this always creates something magical. I call it film, dream, illusion.”

At 16, Puce accidentally attended a film workshop in Bosnia which is how he discovered his love for moving image and from then on began shooting his own music videos, short animated movies and commercials. His passion for the medium has seen him launch a film club and the Short Film Festival in Mostar with friends and he has also worked with New York film critic Howard Feinstein and the Sarajevo Film Festival.

Reflecting on his latest achievement at the Porsche Awards, Puce concludes: “It made me very happy to win the Porsche Award and to get the opportunity to meet all the great directors and jury members from all around the world. I had some great conversations after the awards ceremony and was very pleased it took place at my old academy; on the night the occasion was connected with some really nice old memories.”

Theo von Asmuth

NEW WAYS AWARD



German, aged 27
Hochschule Darmstadt, 2015
Representation unsigned



“The first half of the movie’s camera style is handheld, shaky and vivid. As the main character reaches Germany everything gets steadier.”

“The first half of the movie’s camera style is handheld, shaky and vivid,” states von Asmuth.

“As the main character reaches Germany everything gets steadier. We took the spots we watched as an inspiration and discussed which moments could have similar styles.”

Shooting in Manila proved to be challenging, but was made easier with help from local residents, and the freedom they had was refreshing in terms of locations and schedule compared to the second half of the film, shot on the streets of Germany.

“In Germany, you have to do a schedule with everything in detail, like sending the script and location; you really have to be precise,” the director explains. “You have to be exact with everything such as time, location, the amount of people and what is needed for the shoot.”

Reflecting on the job, von Asmuth reveals that at times it was harder than he had expected it to be and he became resigned to the fact that he probably wouldn’t be able to achieve 100 per cent of his initial vision.

But the fact that von Asmuth’s film eventually won the Porsche New Ways Award proves that genuine talent, resourcefulness and problem-solving skills can go further than simply having a big budget.



Martina Plura

SPECIAL PRIZE



German, aged 29
Hamburg Media School, 2014
Representation Plura Film/unsigned

Six trophies were presented at this year’s Porsche Awards ceremony in Ludwigsburg but the winner in attendance to collect the Special Prize came as a double package.

Director Martina Plura and twin sister DP Monika started shooting horror films at the age of 11 and were so passionate about movies growing up that they started their own film clubs. Working together ever since, their professional relationship has been a natural development, which comes through in their winning film for Hamburg homeless magazine, *Hinz & Kunzt*.

“My sister put a lot of herself and her thoughts into the movie,” assures Martina Plura. “It is just a pleasure to work with her. We understand each other blindly and are complementary in a team. This definitely is a joint win and we shared it.”

Hinged on the title, *Readers See More*, their commercial pays a lively visit to the streets of Hamburg to introduce a *Hinz & Kunzt* reader as he buries his nose in the publication. As he walks down the Reeperbahn, one of the city’s busiest roads, he manages to intercept a mugging, put out a fire and help an elderly lady across the road as well as a host of other good deeds for the benefit of the community.

“I was very happy that we could come up with ideas for something real for a real client and for something good,” explains the director.





Tobias Haase

AUTOMOBILE WINNER



Audi
The Future Chauffeur

German, aged 33
Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, Diploma year 2013
Representation Cobblestone (Germany),
Rocket Film (Switzerland)



“My sister put a lot of herself and her thoughts into the movie. We understand each other blindly and are complementary in a team.”

“It was the school’s idea to make a film for a social institution instead of a ‘fake spot’ and although there was no money involved from the magazine, they got the spot for free.”

The brief was set in one of Plura’s directing workshops at the Hamburg Media School and the budget was pretty much non-existent. There was only enough for the equipment and some coffee and sandwiches on set and Plura’s fellow students pitched in to make the production possible.

“As the preparation time was so short, we didn’t even have shooting permission. We were just doing it in the hope that if the police came they’d understand as we are doing something social,” adds Plura. “The magazine is a household name in Hamburg. There is a really good concept behind it; the homeless people sell the magazine for €1,90. While 0,90 goes to the magazine, the euro goes to the seller.”

Plura reveals that shortly before shooting the piece, she and her sister had worked on a documentary about the homeless in Hamburg and so were already touched by the topic. From horror to the homeless, the pair has certainly proved themselves as a filmmaking force and the Porsche prize is a fitting reward for such a positive project.

When Tobias Haase released a Mercedes-Benz spec spot depicting a young Adolf Hitler a year ago, it caused a stir in Adland and beyond.

“It was such a big thing in Germany,” recalls Haase. “Not only was everyone in the industry talking about it, but ordinary people too and a big newspaper wrote about it.”

The spot was about sensing danger before it arrived and was created to promote Mercedes’ Collision-Prevent-Assist-System, using the dictator as a vehicle for communicating the message.

Meanwhile, over at Audi HQ, head of communications Florian Otto had also caught wind of the spot and liked what he’d seen. “Just days after releasing [the spec spot], I got a phone call from Audi asking me to do a film for them,” says Haase. “First of all it was just a general request but some weeks later they called again with more specifics.”

The project that came out of their conversations is *The Future Chauffeur*, the Porsche Award Automobile winner for 2014. Commissioned by the car manufacturer to open Audi’s keynote speech at CES last year, the ad takes the viewer along for a day in the life of a young (rather annoying) chauffeur to promote the future of the brand’s engineering and driving experience.

After being given some essential keywords to work in, Haase wrote, cast and directed the piece, which was shot over two days in



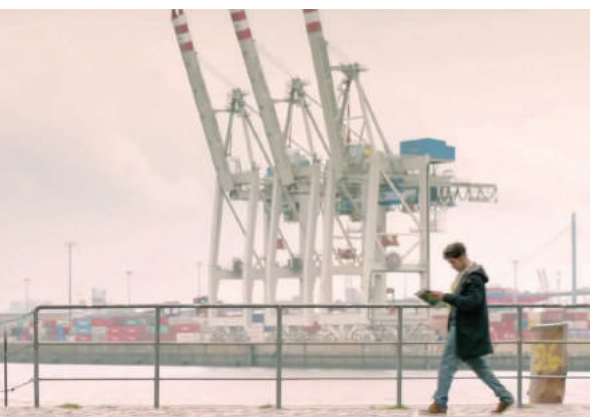
“[Jake Koeppel] was watching me and after a while asked me about the main role. Being desperate I was pretty happy to give him the script...”

LA after 10 days of prep work. At first glance you might think a big Hollywood budget had been granted but in reality the production company decided to cut resources at the last minute to save on costs.

“We had a couple of extras come around even though the production company decided not to have them in the end. Unfortunately, they didn’t know so someone had to tell them about the mistake,” explains Haase. He had already held one unsuccessful casting session.

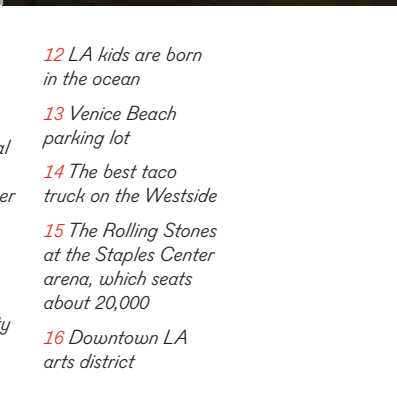
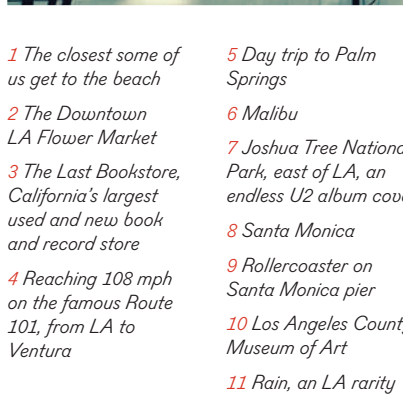
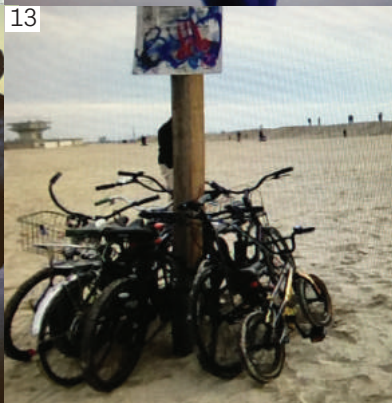
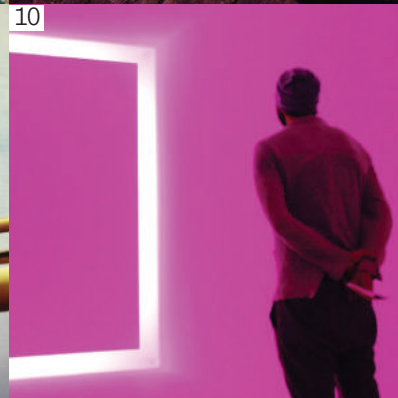
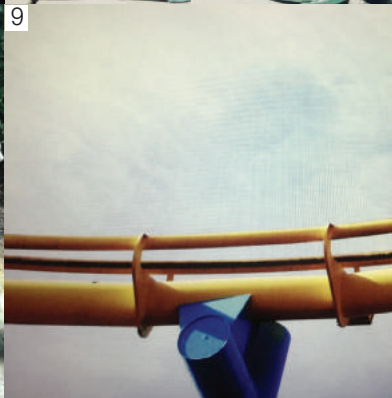
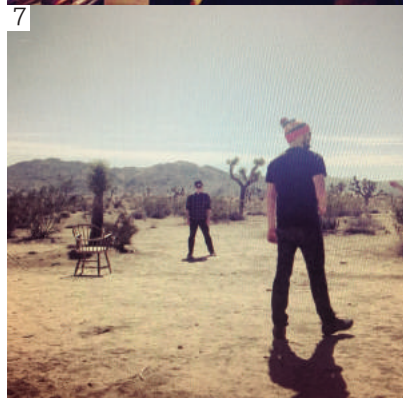
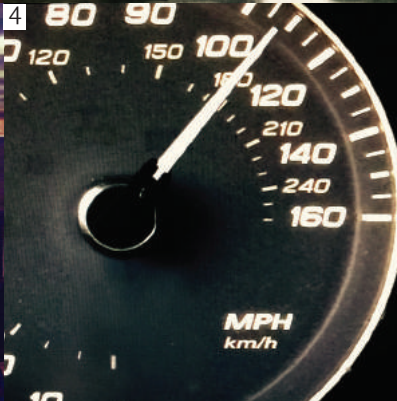
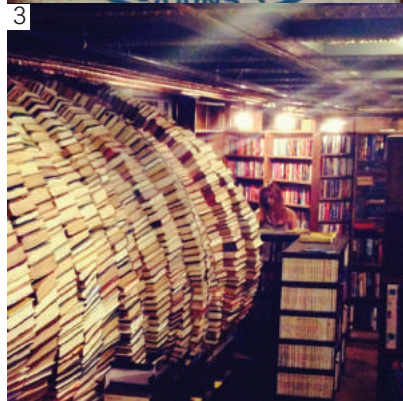
“Everyone left but Jake Koeppel [star of the spot]. He was watching me and after a while he asked me about the main role. Being desperate I was pretty happy to give him the script and told him to surprise me and half an hour later he did. He is probably the best actor I have ever worked with and I am sure he will make his way.”

Starting as a student at the Filmakademie in 2008, Haase is now based in Hamburg and works with German production outfit Cobblestone. On winning the Porsche Award Automobile prize he adds: “It’s funny, because the year before I was in the same competition with MCP (the Mercedes spec spot) and I didn’t win. I loved working on this film so I am very thankful that people appreciate what we did.”



SNAPSHOTS

David Parker, creative director at Jogger VFX, shows us all sides of the City of Angels, the sunny and the rainy, the chic and the cheesy, the grim and the glam...



1 The closest some of us get to the beach

2 The Downtown LA Flower Market

3 The Last Bookstore, California's largest used and new book and record store

4 Reaching 108 mph on the famous Route 101, from LA to Ventura

5 Day trip to Palm Springs

6 Malibu

7 Joshua Tree National Park, east of LA, an endless U2 album cover

8 Santa Monica

9 Rollercoaster on Santa Monica pier

10 Los Angeles County Museum of Art

11 Rain, an LA rarity

12 LA kids are born in the ocean

13 Venice Beach parking lot

14 The best taco truck on the Westside

15 The Rolling Stones at the Staples Center arena, which seats about 20,000

16 Downtown LA arts district

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