

HIGHDEF.ORG

Autumn 2000

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Editor's Statement

HighDef.Org is proud to be the first magazine to feature the amazing achievement of Director Peter Shaner who has just completed the first feature film shot entirely in 24p. He is a fascinating man who does not come from the usual Hollywood background. When I interviewed him in person at APS LA, I felt the presence of a man with vision, a man going places on the changing horizon of independent movie making, and a man who will go down in history as a mover and a shaker in the 24p format.

From the heartwarming story Go Tigers!, to a vicarious trip to Ireland, to a real life action adventure series for Discovery Channel by Producer Michael Hoff, our computer keys are clicking with unbridled excitement as we continue to bring you the latest in HD news.

May all your shoots be in HighDef,

Laura Nielson
Editor

HighDef.Org

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NICOLAS

Film Information Technology Conference and Exposition

Coming up is an important meeting called the Film Information Technology Conference and Exposition (FilmIT) on October 26 & 27, 2000 at Sheraton Universal Hotel in Los Angeles, CA. Its single focus will be on the convergence of the film and technology industries. FilmIT's Mission Statement reads: Singularity in vision and purpose. To create an event specifically for the filmmaking industry that is dedicated to providing insights, answers, and strategic direction for executives and business professionals within a new emerging landscape.

With all the changes we're experiencing in this business, this conference should be a welcome addition to the discussions already started. FilmIT will consist of diverse and credible participants. Bob Davis, CEO of Terra Lycoa, and Will Poole, VP at the Digital Media Division of Microsoft, will be the leading keynote speakers. There will be 25 in-depth sessions, workshops, and keynotes covering such topics as: DAM: Digital Conversion Data Warehousing, Encoding and more; Advances in Filmmaking Resources Through Technology; The Other Form: Online Film's Impact; Digital Distribution: Delivery & Streaming Technologies; DRM: Content, Copyright & Royalty Protection; Digital Distribution: Media Players; The Web & Your Company's Web Based Strategy; IT Infrastructure, Internet & Extranet strategies; Web Based/Online Programming & Content.

FilmIT's program is specifically tailored for: studio heads, executive producers, producers, directors, IT directors, editors, chief executive officers, chief technology officers, distribution directors, new media executives, web programming directors, online channel producers, sales & marketing executives, and legal, copyright and royalty management.

You can visit the FilmIT web site at www.FILMITCON.COM or for additional information about attending, contact Dana Knox, ISG, Inc. Phone: 203-254-7998 or email: dknox@instinctsg.com.

HD Opportunities at GAIT

The 2000 GAIT Television & Internet Festival was held at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel on September 7 and 8. GAIT, which stands for Global Association of Independent Television is an organization with the mission of promoting the distribution and production of independently produced programming and talent for television and the Internet. The festival was a refreshing look at opportunities for independents to find outlets for their ideas, productions and talent. One of the most interesting sessions was a conversation with prolific pitchman Robert Kosberg. On the last day of the festival, a lifetime achievement award was given to writer/producer Stephen J. Cannell. GAIT promises to be an important outlet and source of information for HD producers in the future. GAIT can be found at www.gait.net, and also runs the site TV-Pilot.com which is a database for programming buyers to search for available episodic programs.

HD Digital Fusion in Jackson Hole

This year's Jackson Hole Film Festival entitled DIGITAL FUSION: Symposium 2000, featured results from HD producers around the world. With many screenings of projects like "Smokey Joe's Cafe," Barry Clark's "Sahara," and the trailer for the new 24P feature "NICOLAS," the festival proved again to be at the cutting edge of HD technology. Heavy discussion about the merging, converging, and whatever else you want to call it concerning all aspects of media from digital cinema to internet, DVD and even palm pilot transmissions filled the three day event. In addition, an exhibit of the latest in HD equipment was also on hand. More information about the festival and future events can be found at www.jhfestival.org.

Nothing But The Story

by Kelly-Jane Hanlon

Producer/Director Brad White has a story to tell, and for his new film, *Nothing But the Truth*, he chose the HD format to record the tale. White, always striving to be at the forefront of technology, initially opted to shoot in HighDef for budgetary reasons, but found that speed was also another advantage to the format. For example, where customarily in lower-budget films, time allows for only one or two takes, White found that there was time for five or six. The dark comedy/love story, one of the first feature films to be shot entirely in HighDef, was shot in 21 days, just one day more than planned, at locations in Los Angeles and the San Bernardino Mountains. The speed of shooting in a video format allowed time to deal appropriately with the high level of action happening in the film.

White, whose other endeavors include projects for companies such as Mattel, Hewlett-Packard and IBM, feels that the speed and ease of shooting in HD allows the direc-

tor to stick to storytelling. Traditionally in film, the director is often taken away from the actors due to the demanding technicalities of film. "It (HD) allows you to get rid of the technical issues. . . like, 'I hear the noise. There's a click in the magazine,' blowing out the gate, you know? All these things that we're constantly doing and worrying about." White feels that by removing these technical nuisances, the director is returned to the actors. "Get rid of all that stuff. I don't care about talking technical. I don't care about having to check the gate, and when to check the gate, you know? HD takes all that stuff away. You all stand around a monitor. You see what you're going to get. You talk about it, and you get on with your filmmaking."

Brad encourages filmmakers to embrace the filmless format. "I'd love to continue to shoot in HD. That's my goal, to continue to tell stories and to use the HD camera to stay closer to the storytelling aspect."

For more info: www.nothingbutthetruth.org



“Go Tigers!” This is not just a game...

by Sidney Sherman

For director Kenneth A. Carlson, returning to his hometown of Massillon, Ohio to film a documentary on the Washington High School football team - the Massillon Tigers was a dream come true.

Why Massillon? Located in northeastern part of Ohio, Massillon is primarily an industrial city which, in its heyday, was known for its steel production. With a population of roughly 33,000 this sleepy town is like any blue-collar city which has watched time pass it by, except for one thing – high school football.

On any given Friday night, you can join 20,000 of the town's population in cheering on the Massillon Tigers.

This is a show like no other, sporting a live tiger cub as a mascot, an usher known as “the Tiger Lady” who hasn't missed a game in 38 years, and a smoke filled tunnel that the players charge out of before each home game and fireworks that punctuate every Tiger score and victory.

Make no mistake; spectacle aside, for the people of Massillon, this is not just a game, this is their identity, their life. They define themselves by their football team, and the team in turn gains its strength from the citizens and their undying love of the game and their will to win. And the Massillon Tigers have won: 22 times as Ohio State Champions, to be exact.

A stand-out football player growing up, Carlson played for a neighboring high school and later at the collegiate level for the Brown University Bruins. Clearly, Carlson understood the unique challenges in trying to capture the excitement and energy of a season, while telling the story of the town of Massillon. He had recently completed his feature directorial debut (Special Delivery, a romantic comedy starring Sean Young, Penny Marshall, Paul Dooley and Nell Carter which was shot on 35mm), when he decided now was the time to finally undertake his dream gridiron project.

The decision to shoot in High Definition was made



after Carlson and producer Sidney Sherman attended a screening demonstration at the Sony HighDef Center. "The detail in the images and the 16x9 widescreen presentation is what attracted me to the format," recalls Carlson. "Originally, we had intended to shoot on film, but then Sony showed us how good HighDef transferred to 35mm could look," said Sherman. Because the documentary was intended for theatrical release, the ability to take the HighDef Master back out to 35mm was crucial for the filmmakers in their decision-making process. Cost was an issue as well. "I knew we were going to have to shoot a ton of footage during the course of the season with multiple cameras at times, and HighDef gave me the opportunity to get the coverage I needed without exceeding our budget," said Carlson.

Using the Sony HDW-700A HighDef camera provided by Plus 8 Video in Burbank, the filmmakers set out to document the season of the Massillon Tigers from their first practice until their final play of the season. "I decided

to focus on the three captains of the team as a way to tell the town's story through these young men and their experiences throughout the season," said Carlson. Director of Photography Curt Apduhan's approach to the film was straight-forward. "Because of our run and gun approach, we had a minimal lighting package that consisted of a 4 bank Kino Flo and a couple of 1K's for fill when needed. The lighting units were used primarily to augment the available light. We pretty much shot with existing light and tried to let the camera capture the moment.

"I believe HighDef is the future and cinematographers will have to become familiar with it. Those who see its potential will view it as a new and exciting tool to help us tell stories, not as a medium that will replace us," said Apduhan. Go Tigers! is currently in post-production, and the filmmakers are expecting to complete the film for a January release. For more information and to view the trailers for the film, visit the Go Tigers! web site at www.gotigersfilm.com ♦



Triple Play Presents
 A film by
 Kenneth A. Carlson
 Go Tigers!
 Written, Produced & Directed by
 Kenneth A. Carlson
 Produced by
 Sidney Sherman
 Executive Producer
 Todd Robinson
 Director of Photography
 Curt Apduhan
 Edited by
 Jeff Werner
 Music by
 Randy Miller



Dr. Adam Brittin, reaches into crocodiles mouth to find sensor that has been collecting data for past two years.

Crocodile Wranglers, Mardi Gras, and Monster Waves: Three Discovery Channel Successes.

by Kyle Chamberlain

Crocodile Wranglers, Mardi Gras, and Monster Waves are three riveting documentaries produced in High Definition for the Discovery Channel, by Michael Hoff Productions based in San Francisco. Crocodile Wranglers features stories about one of the most aggressive creatures in the world and the naturalists, researchers, and adventurers who work with them. Few people approach them. Few understand them. Few can face them, except the Crocodile Wranglers who are found around the world. Crocodiles are endangered in some places and in others they are running amuck. Crocodile Wranglers tells the story of brave and dedicated researchers and naturalists who are looking for answers about this prehistoric looking creature. While some are successfully breeding them to augment the balance of the Eco-system and scientifically studying them, others are capturing those threatening human lives and relocating them in habitats.

The most fascinating story in the documentary is so real it is almost nauseating. Dr. Adam Brittin, the foremost authority on Crocodiles in Australia, with the help of his crew, snares the jaws of a crocodile, injects him with a sedative, and then reaches his hand deep down inside the crocodile's mouth. At first he removes a rock, bones from previous meals, and human glasses. In High Definition the gushing liquid that spurts out from the stomach looks like vomit. After 20 minutes of searching the anatomy, Dr. Britton finds the sensor that had been collecting vital research data for the past two years. It's like watching an operation only worse. With HD there is soon to be a new film rating, "SR-WO." It will stand for "So Real, Watch Out,"

Continued on next page...



"SR-WO." It will stand for "So Real, Watch Out," you'll think it's happening to you.

...Today it is the biggest public celebration in the world with 49 parades, 30,000 costumed riders, and nearly 100 million beaded necklaces.



Mardis Gras crowd

you'll think it's happening to you. It's guaranteed Discovery fans will enjoy the realism.

If you've never been to Mardi Gras you will feel as though you have when you watch Hoff's high definition production of the biggest party in the world. It is wild, sexy, and dirty. All of which a viewer personally feels, joining in a celebration with more than a million other people who have descended on the city of New Orleans. Described as a snake with a thousand heads its traditions date back to ancient Spring fertility rituals that celebrated laws of nature, life and rebirth. Over the centuries the Catholic Church transformed the pagan celebration into a Pre-Easter Festival. They made it an acceptable time to indulge in the sins of the flesh before the fasting and penitents of Lent. The season was known as carnival and the final 12 days became known as Mardi Gras, French for "Fat Tuesday."

It lasts twelve days with spectacular parties sponsored

by the private social clubs called Crews. Today it is the biggest public celebration in the world with 49 parades, 30,000 costumed riders, and nearly 100 million beaded necklaces. Float designers, costume designers, Crews, organizations, promoters, and a host of other related businesses prepare all year for Mardi Gras. Then, after it is all over, street-cleaners pick up a thousand tons of garbage left behind littering the streets. For all the people who always wanted to attend Mardi Gras but couldn't afford it, they will have the time of their lives watching it on the Discovery Channel. And... thanks to HD, will feel like they have really been there!

Few choose to face what producer Michael Hoff calls the Monster Waves. In his documentary about the brave men who face the largest surf in North America be prepared to be scared. The HD special documents destruction, violence, and rescue. It is a true-life action adventure on the high seas. It is about the unstoppable destruction of

the ocean and the people who face the monster waves to save the lives of others. At Cape Disappointment in Washington State, it is the home of the Coast Guard's "National Life Boat School." They call it the graveyard of the Pacific. This is where the Columbia River collides with the mouth of the Pacific Ocean, or "jaws of the deep." Founded in 1983 this military school teaches search and rescue in extreme conditions. For all those action adventure fans this documentary is a must.

Discovery Channel will be airing these shows throughout the year. Check your local listings for times. As for Producer Michael Hoff, not only is he beginning to stockpile HD shows for a very long shelf life, he rejoices in being a part of an exciting medium. "Working with HD is like eating the most incredible dessert you can imagine all day long. I think it's beautiful." ♦



HD

A First in Film History: Peter Shaner Directs a Feature in 24P

by Laura Nielson

Independent film Director and Producer, Peter Shaner, thrilled his investors when he tripled their money on his first feature, a romantic comedy, called *Lover's Knot*. With such a financial success it was a slam-dunk when he proposed his second project to the same investors. His phone didn't stop ringing for a month as word got around; "Shaner's deal is better than the stock market." Ready to roll the cameras, Shaner made a daring decision to film in 24p. It had never been done. Film purists had shied away from high definition adhering to the old myth that HD could never look like film. Peter Shaner would prove them wrong. "I lit the set as if it was film and I'll let you be the judge."

And judge I was sitting in the 24p HighDef editing suite at American Production Services in LA watching the stunning footage of *NICOLAS*, a smoldering story of 'true love.' I was literally bowled over by the powerful images that rivaled film. The slight flickering and beautiful imagery had me fooled. Could this be the new version of HD? "Naw! You're putting me on, it looks like film!" I exclaimed. Editor Walt McGinn laughed as he pressed a button finalizing the HD cuts. If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes, I would have been the proverbial "doubting Thomas".

During the planning stages of *NICOLAS*, Shaner reviewed his budget. He had scheduled fifteen out of the necessary eighteen-day shoot to be completed on sound stages, an expense he didn't have in *Lover's Knot*. In addition he needed to hire a special effects technician for copious fire scenes. Fortunate to acquire the services of Dean Miller, the fire expert for action flick *Dante's Peak*,



Gretchen Egolf

the additional expenses were mounting. Shaner looked for other places to economize. At the time there were rumors that 24p had emerged on the scene. When he inquired nobody seemed to have 24p cameras. "I think there were two in existence that you could go look at in a petting zoo over at Panavision," Shaner chuckled. "I investigated and started salivating over those cameras like every

other independent filmmaker. I wondered if there was any chance we could get our hands on those 24p cameras."

Shaner continued to do research talking to cameramen that had shot with the 700 and 700A. He viewed their footage and decided the 700's would be his foray into a new medium for features. He scheduled and rented the cameras, shot tests, and was ready to launch his pro-



Gretchen Egolf, Jason Connery and Marcus Graham star in NICOLAS

duction when a fortuitous event took place. His DP knew the President of Panavision and deftly pitched him with the idea of shooting their feature in 24p. Without hesitating, Panavision energetically agreed to the prototype.

After Shaner paid the new HD camera rental rate he and his crew were ecstatic to have the first chance in the world for such an opportunity. Suddenly the production

on NICOLAS escalated to a higher level. Some actors and crew came on board, working for very little money, just to have the opportunity to work in 24p and go down in history as pioneers. At every stage in the production Shaner was fortunate. He had an incredible production designer, John Zachary, Dean Miller for special effects, and the talented DP Steven Douglas Smith. Everything coalesced

perfectly.

As the eighteen-day shoot progressed, Shaner discovered daily, some difficult and delightful surprises about 24p. First was the dazzling rendition of color. Shaner had discussed the look he wanted for the protagonist's apartment with his set designer. Everything in Laura's life

Continued on next page...

was rather cool, a reflection of where Shaner saw her state of mind. The designer created a color palate, an invigorating blend, of blues, yellows, and greens. He displayed subdued art on the walls mirroring modern masterpieces. When the dailies of Laura's apartment were projected, the colors were so vibrant it had a mystical quality as if morphed into a Kandinsky painting. Shaner was aiming for a hyper reality. "To be able to utilize the microscopic contrast of 24p with the different looks we designed, made the multiple layers of reality possible. Whether it's a flashback or a fantasy or a trance or a dream sequence, we were able to achieve a unique look for each altered reality."

"There are a lot of misconceptions about 24p as well as High Definition and the comparison between them and film. At this early stage of the game they have almost become clichè in the industry. Some are: you don't need a crew; you don't need to light; or you don't need to take care with it. The truth of the matter is, the camera is capable of remarkable imagery but you still have to put as much care into how that image is controlled as you do any visual medium, whether it's 35mm film or an instamatic camera. Great care must be taken in lighting and composing a shot. If you just point and shoot, you'll get something that looks like really great home video. Nothing more."

Shaner insisted on a sound stage on which he could ensure ultimate control of the lighting. No detail would be left to chance. He could control the direction from where the light was authored, the color and temperature of the light, and the intensity to ensure exact latitude range. It was no different than what a DP does for a major motion picture. They maximized the medium.

Shooting the feature in 24p was a real bonus for Shaner and his investors. It automatically and dramatically lowered the cost of his feature by as much as half the expense of shooting in 35mm. Now Shaner could play the game like the big boys, the studios with the extravagant budgets. Shaner had monitors on the set at all times so there was never any guesswork eliminating extra days for retakes and cost over-runs. He could always see each take exactly the way it was being recorded. There was never the torture for Shaner of wondering: "Gosh, I hope

it was focused right; I hope that camera move worked; or why didn't we see that was in the frame. We will have to shoot again and we'll be over budget." Shaner was able to save time and money by watching the 24p filming on the monitors. He always knew exactly what he had. "I found with this asset I could spend more time shooting more takes to ensure the best performance. I didn't have to settle for less based on time and budget. I'd say okay, good, reset. Okay, good, reset. And what that did was the actors never had to come out of the moment. Whereas in film, every time you say 'cut' the energy on the set dissipates. The actors relax while everyone immediately starts doing what his or her job is. Make-up people rush in to touch up. Wardrobe adjusts the garments, and lighting starts tweaking lights. The magic on the set happens when the camera is rolling, when everyone's attention is focused on creating a moment for the camera to capture. So... the longer you can keep the camera running, the more of that

intensity you can generate and capture."

The shooting of NICOLAS was a two-edge sword. They were lucky... exceedingly so to be the first. On the other side of the sword there was no instruction manual. No one knew exactly what to expect. One glitch resulted when they had to change a battery in the camera. Each time they changed the battery, the camera would automatically revert to a default timecode. Quickly they learned to reset the time code with each battery change. Meanwhile the sound operators found that they didn't have the right cable to get the sound back into the camera and had to utilize ingenuity to solve their problem. At first make-up artists applied their stars with traditional film style make-up. It was too heavy. The 24p camera made it look like stage make-up or pancake painted on for a 30's look. At the same time the DP was experimenting with filtration. The shooting pace of week one crawled as each

Continued on page 16...



HD



The magic on the set happens when the camera is rolling, when everyone's attention is focused on creating a moment for the camera to capture. So... the longer you can keep the camera running, the more of that intensity you can generate and capture."

– Peter Shaner

professional mastered their area in the new medium of 24p. By week two they were strolling and then running comfortably, making up for lost time. Shaner added, "Everyone was really so professional even from day one that the difference between the first and last week are things that really only the professional technician would have noticed."

Shaner was schooled at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, entered the



Jason Connery

Shooting the feature in 24p was a real bonus... It automatically and dramatically lowered the cost of his feature by as much as half the expense of shooting in 35mm.

Navy as a commissioned officer, and flew for seven years as a navigator. "The military is a stark contrast to the way Hollywood is run. The military is actually refreshing. No one is motivated by money, no one has a hidden agenda, there are no secrets, and everyone wears their rank on their sleeve so you can tell just how to act and where you stand by looking at them. Imagine if Hollywood were run that way?" Currently Shaner flies once a month as part of the reserves in between his filming adventures. The day I interviewed him he was leaving for Guam. As a navigator Shaner revealed, "I am responsible for knowing where the aircraft is at all times during the flight. I have to make sure that we get where we are going, and that we arrive on time." His words sounded like a metaphor for the description of a director.

Little wonder when Shaner was stationed in LA, he memorized and identified with a quote Warren Beatty had once given Newsweek, "You go to a theatre and something magic happens on screen. You want to raise your hand and say wait a minute – I want to make one of these."

Shaner enrolled in the University of Southern California's prestigious film school master's program. There he combined the best of his military schooling with his creative side to become a director known for commanding a film set with precision, diplomatic leadership and enthusiasm, and creative sparks of brilliance the actors admire.

The first of September, E-Film transferred the trailer for NICOLAS to 35mm. It was shown to LA professionals in the industry who were stunned by the sterling quality. They clapped wildly for several minutes transfixed by the nouveau medium, purportedly staying up until 2:00am discussing the ramifications of 24p and the endless possibilities.

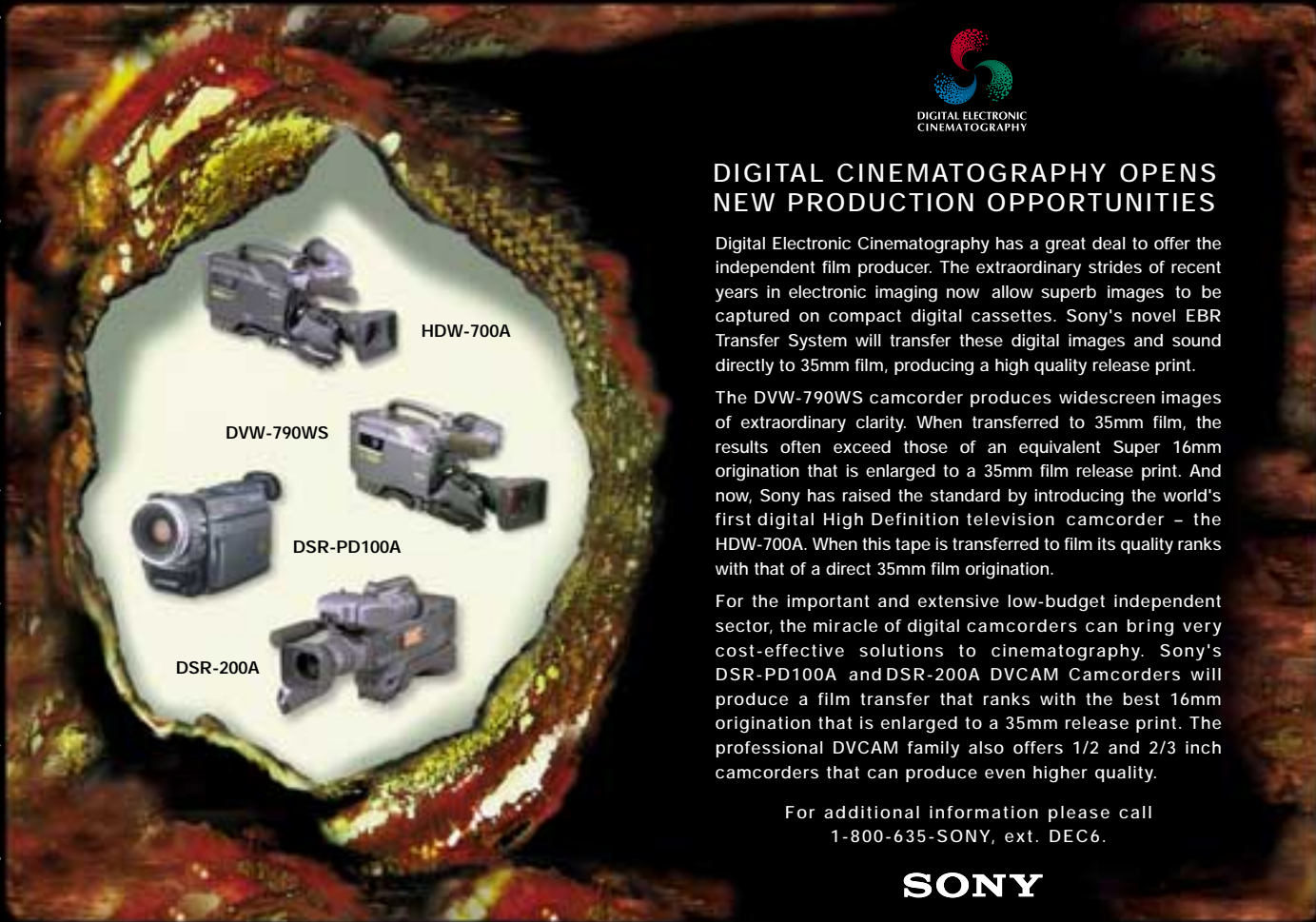
NICOLAS, shot in 24p, promises to be a success with two surefire entertainment condiments: love and sex. However, the buzz in the industry is about the success of

24p. Engineered by a skillful director, Peter Shaner, is pulling off a first in television and film history and for the time being will be the template by which all subsequent 24p features will be measured as they rapidly crack the elite echelons of the film world. ♦

Character
 Laura Miller
 Matt Draper
 Nicolas
 Jocelyn
 Bernard Kirby
 Madame Marie

Cast
 Gretchen Egolf
 Jason Connery
 Marcus Graham
 Dawnn Lewis
 John deLancie
 Max Gail

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DIGITAL CINEMATOGRAPHY OPENS NEW PRODUCTION OPPORTUNITIES

Digital Electronic Cinematography has a great deal to offer the independent film producer. The extraordinary strides of recent years in electronic imaging now allow superb images to be captured on compact digital cassettes. Sony's novel EBR Transfer System will transfer these digital images and sound directly to 35mm film, producing a high quality release print.

The DVW-790WS camcorder produces widescreen images of extraordinary clarity. When transferred to 35mm film, the results often exceed those of an equivalent Super 16mm origination that is enlarged to a 35mm film release print. And now, Sony has raised the standard by introducing the world's first digital High Definition television camcorder - the HDW-700A. When this tape is transferred to film its quality ranks with that of a direct 35mm film origination.

For the important and extensive low-budget independent sector, the miracle of digital camcorders can bring very cost-effective solutions to cinematography. Sony's DSR-PD100A and DSR-200A DVCAM Camcorders will produce a film transfer that ranks with the best 16mm origination that is enlarged to a 35mm release print. The professional DVCAM family also offers 1/2 and 2/3 inch camcorders that can produce even higher quality.

For additional information please call
1-800-635-SONY, ext. DEC6.

SONY



The Luck of The Irish? Rather The Luck of HD

Seattle KING TV produced an HDTV special on Ireland, The Isle of Enchantment

by Laura Nielson

In a storybook setting like Ireland, Tom Bishop, HD Cameraman for Evening had no trouble chronicling the fairytale story of Northwest woman, Erika Lee who won an Irish pub in May 1999. To beat more than 50,000 contestants, who had entered the Guinness Brewery's annual "Win a Pub Contest," she threw darts at a bull's-eye, poured a perfect pint of beer, and wrote an irresistible essay. Although I'm not a beer drinker, watching Erika pour a pint of beer on HD in her new pub called J. O'Sullivan's made my mouth water. It looked so real, I felt as though I could feel the foam on my lips and licked them reflexively. With traditional Irish music playing in the background, the rosy glow of the friendly Irish faces singing and talking calmed my apprehension for a young woman leaving the security of her friends and family. In HD it was as if I was sitting at a table in J. O'Sullivan's making new friends myself, a feeling shared by thousands of other viewers glued to their sets.

"Calling all single women trying to find a man to marry," Host John Stofflet announced. "Ireland's bachelor farmers are looking for eligible women to marry." In the old days Irish single women painted their house blue, an advertisement for a husband. If a bachelor was interested he would toss his hat into the doorway. If the young lady returned his sentiments, she kept it, and courting began.

"The farm was, well let's say the cow pasture was more picturesque."

— Tom Bishop

Today Irish bachelors are counting on a calendar sporting their photos to attract a bride.

John and Tom journeyed to the countryside to film the bachelors. "I think we were hoping that our first bachelor would practically come out in a leprechaun suit with a castle in the background." John laughed. Instead, the farm was run down, and the scenery was an ad for hard work and long hours. It was apparent why the Irish girls were leaving the country for better paying jobs in the city.

"I had to think fast," Tom interjected. "The farm was, well let's say the cow pasture was more picturesque." Several years ago, Tom had developed a portable silk reflector system for easy travel with HD shoots. But the cows were aggressively interested in the c-stands. Tom speedily grabbed the necessary footage of the hopeful dairy farmer, folded up his gear in a hurry, and ran with a cow nipping at his heels. Meanwhile a herd was following John. Too bad this wasn't on HD!

Tom filmed another bachelor named Frank leaning out his window. In a common Irish poetic sounding voice he said, "If heaven is anything like this, I'll just have a piece of it." I thought, "If anything could help him catch a bride HD was his ally." His words melted more than one heart. Hundreds of letters greeted Frank the next week.

"The detail is fantastic," On camera talent John gushed. "To first see yourself in HD is the closest thing you have to seeing yourself in person or as someone else sees you. The detail is so fantastic it looks almost as if I was chromakeyed into the shot because the background as was as sharp as my face." At first John had to worry about shaving accidents in the morning. Every nick on his face showed up on camera. "Even a little pimple on my chin that never was a big deal with NTSC, now caused me stress."

With HD perfect focus includes the background.

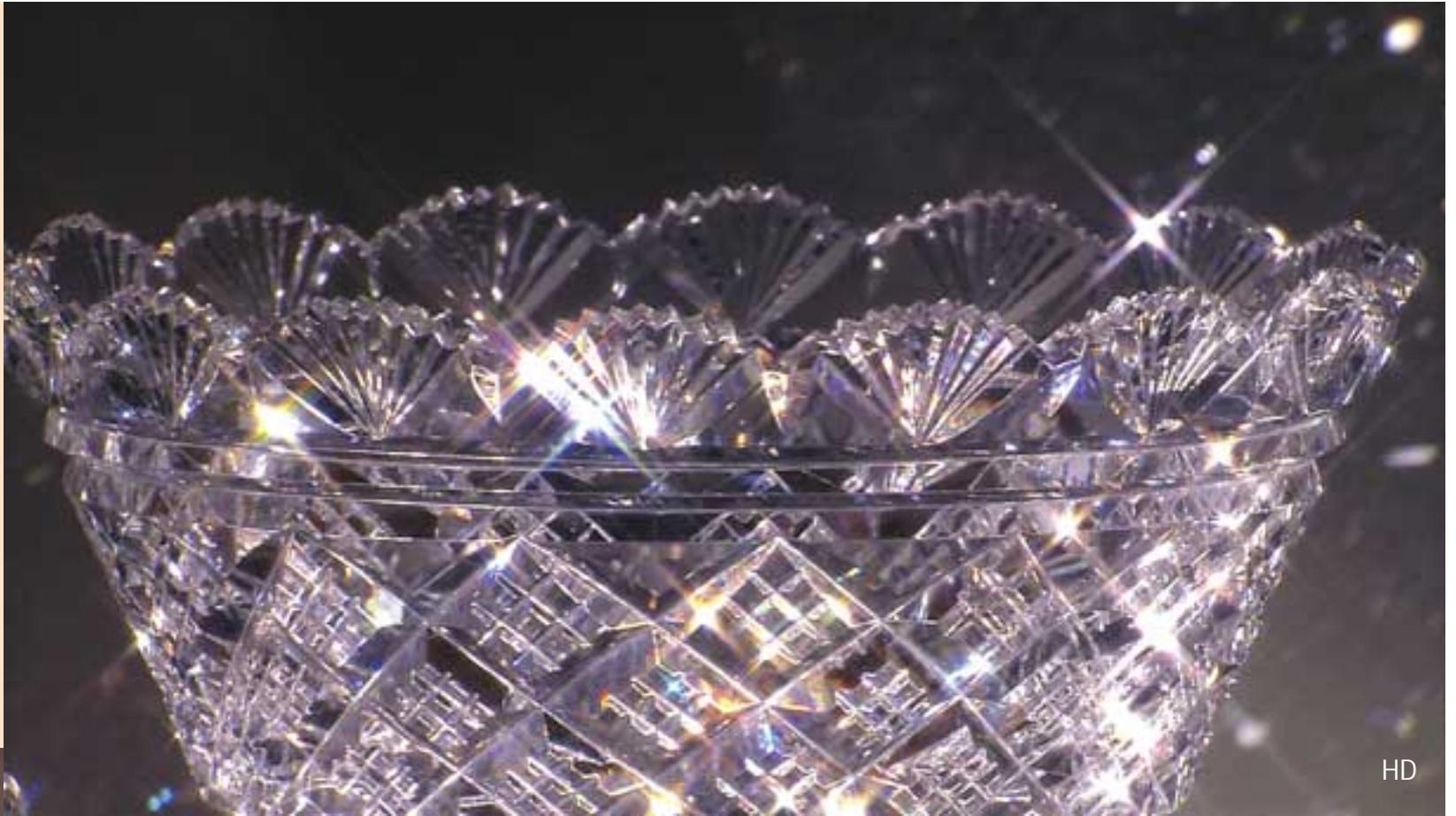
— Tom Bishop

Case in point, on the Dingle Peninsula, where the cliffs are spectacular, Tom filmed John on a boat in search of a bottle nosed dolphin named Fungi who swam into the area in 1983 and never left. With John in perfect focus in a close-up, Fungi swam into the background, made a spectacular leap into the air all in such acute focus that my eyes diverted from John to the Dolphin. With HD perfect focus includes the background. On Tom and John's tight eight-day shoot, HD made it all possible. No shot was wasted. In close up shots of Fungi jumping, the splashing water looks threatening. It's not unusual for an HD viewer to react with a quick ducking motion to avoid getting wet... and then laugh realizing its only on TV.

Tom's nightmares came true when they were doing scenics of Dingle. "I went out one morning to get a sunrise, a mood piece. There were castles everywhere. So, I pulled back for a wide shot of one. The tide was out and there was a pile of plastic jugs and garbage that had washed up onto the shore. In a wide shot of NTSC it wouldn't have shown up, but with HD it did. Even when we are running and gunning we still have to pay attention to detail or get in trouble."

The world's most famous crystal is made in a riverside city in southeast Ireland called Waterford. The crystal

Continued on next page...



HD



HD



HD

is known as sparkling works of art born of sand and fire. Each day artisans look forward to making one item crystal clear. First they blow and mold the glass by hand. Then cutters and engravers add their artistry. Each crystal pattern is rendered from memory and if they make a mistake they aren't paid. "The HD photography is sparkling. One sees more fine detail on HighDef than by the naked eye."

"I never had to worry about capturing the shot I needed. In fact it always played back better than I anticipated." Tom added.

Tom needed some insert shots of the town Galway. The King's Head Pub dating back to 1649 had quaint leaded glass windows. "I wanted to shoot through them for a classic wide shot of the town." Tom said earnestly. However upon inquiry the proprietor revealed that the windows were located on a facade. If they stood on it they'd fall through onto the sidewalk. Tom was relentless. He had to have that shot. Using a little ingenuity, Tom figured he could film through the women's bathroom. But women needed to use the toilet. "So, I'm standing in this extremely narrow hallway," Tom narrates, "and this woman comes by and looks kind of perturbed. She goes by and demands, 'Are you coming in or not?'" Tom shimmied onto a row of sinks and lying across, temporarily removed a double window-pane protecting the original leaded window centuries old. "And after all that trouble and tipping the bartender five pounds to let us into the WC," Tom laments, "it never made it into the final show!"

A two-man team creates every episode of Evening. Tom's the cameraman and John does multiple duty as writer, grip, assistant editor, and talent. Using a news/documentary style shoot, they took eight days to get the necessary footage. If the weather was bad they had to go with it. While other documentaries take a year or two to film, they don't have that luxury. I call them miracle men to which they reply "It's the beauty of HD equipment. You can trust the camera. The weather doesn't matter; the shots will be beautiful in a moody sort of way. Whatever you see in the viewfinder, the light balance, and everything else, is what you'll get. HD never let us down." Tom gushed. John added, "I'm giddy over HD. When you're looking at a castle that's back lit by a sunset and you can still make

out the detail of the cross on the spire, it's awe inspiring. Now when I watch our program it's as if I'm looking at Ireland through a window and I'm there all over again."

Seattle is one of the highest penetration areas of HD sets and all three affiliates are up and running on digital signals. Yet, the question is always the same, "What's the return on our investment?" Until the market reaches a flash point much like VCR's in the 80's, HD will still be lagging behind. But... the fact remains; HD is the next best thing to being there. Viewers can live vicariously through High Definition. I know. I felt as if I had just been to Ireland with Tom Bishop and John Stofflet. This episode of Evening has just been nominated for an Ira award at the annual NATPE 200 award's ceremony. Is this the "Luck of the Irish?" I say, it's the "Luck of HD." ♦

"I'm giddy over HD. When you're looking at a castle that's back lit by a sunset and you can still make out the detail of the cross on the spire, it's awe inspiring."

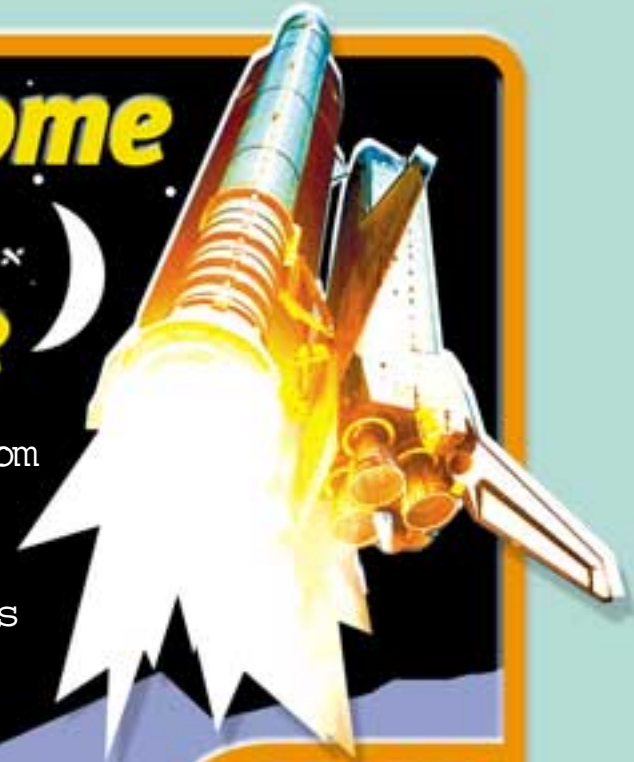
– Tom Bishop



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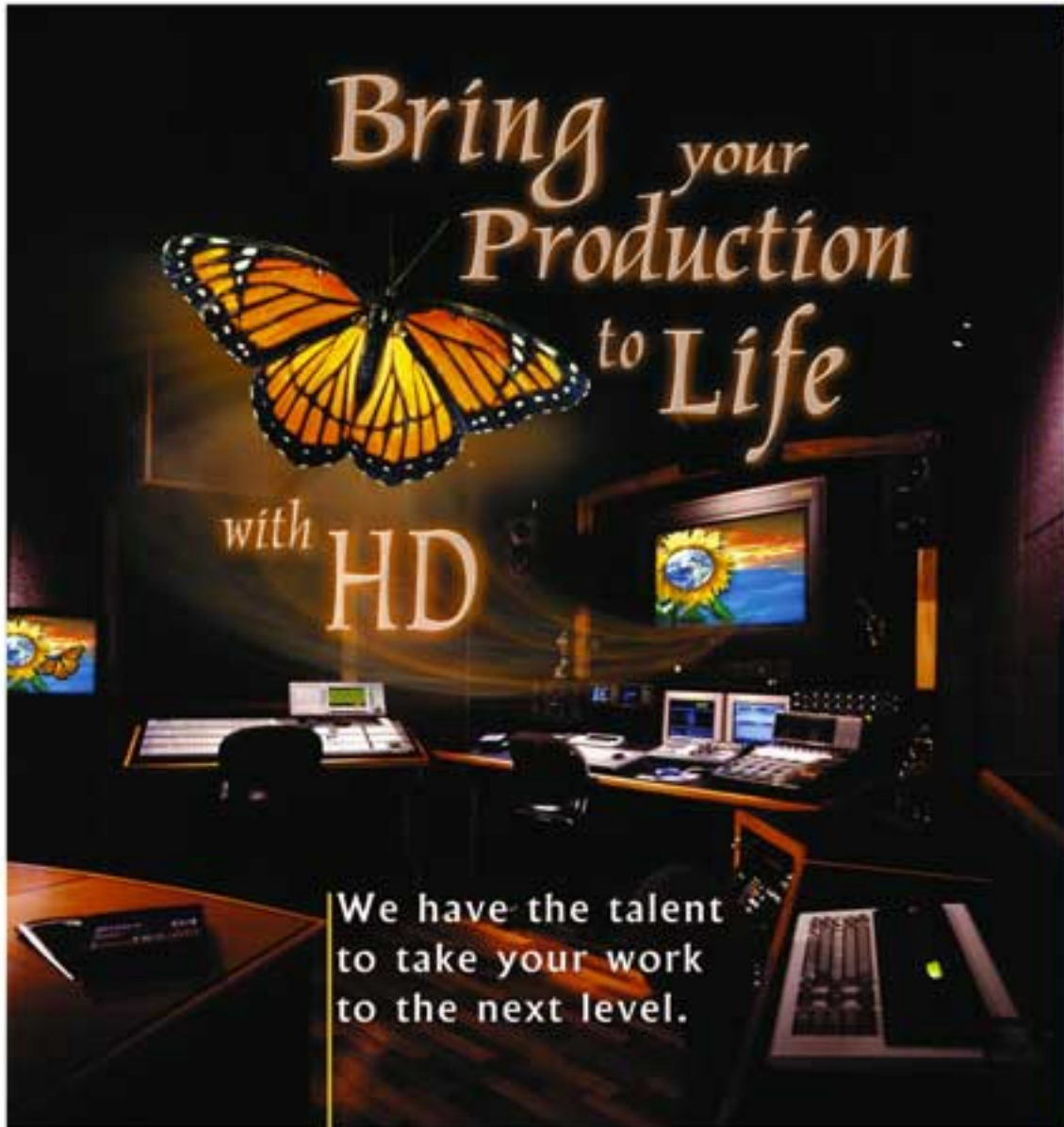
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