



UK Cameraman Killed in Dubai

'Malfunction' downs camera-helicopter.

Aerial photographer **Matthew Allwork**, 39, was killed at the end of March last while filming a sporting event from a helicopter in Dubai. The award-winning cameraman was covering the Dubai Endurance Horse Race when the aircraft, owned by Dubai police and flown by a local pilot-officer, developed a 'technical malfunction' and crashed just outside the city limits. Both occupants were dead when rescue teams reached the wreckage.

The son of distinguished Guild member DoP **Peter Allwork**, who founded

the eminent Aerial Camera Systems company, Matthew eventually took over the running of the business and built it up to become one of the leading suppliers of aerial film and television services all over the world. Matthew was also noted for his work using gyro-stabilised camera systems at major sporting events, and among his many awards were Emmy's for the Sydney 2000 Olympics and the **Janet Jackson** concert in New York's Madison Square Garden. He is survived by his wife and two children.

BoG will Introduce Proxy Voting

Low turnout at AGM spurs decision.

March's AGM produced a very poor attendance of Guild members despite the Board's urgent request for an extra effort in order to vote some necessary changes to the GBCT's constitution. Over fifty members have to be in attendance to make such changes, but in the event only some forty turned up at the Panavision theatre in Greenford.

"Unfortunately it's not all that surprising," said Guild secretary **Simon Mills**. "Low attendance at AGMs has always been a problem, but in view of the extra effort that we put in asking members to at least send in proxy votes on these constitutional issues it is disappointing that we still couldn't tie up the final loose ends of the Guild's restructuring at the meeting."

The constitution has always allowed for proxy voting and the Board is now agreed that it is high time to implement it. At a meeting held directly after the AGM, the Board decided that proxy votes would be solicited

from the membership by fax or e-mail where possible, and by mail where members were not linked to the Internet. Such proxies will only be sought on specific issues - they will not be a blanket licence to be used by the Board in perpetuity, although each proxy might ask for consent to vote on more than one issue. These would be stated on the proxy request.

Mills added, "The Board has always been sensitive to the fact that even when we had over five-hundred members we still struggled to attract barely ten per cent of the membership to the AGMs, and it is doubly frustrating when you stop to consider the huge amount of work that has been put in over the last eighteen months to rebuild the GBCT."

A proxy form is being sent to every Guild member. "This is very important," said Mills. "So I am asking every member to take the time to simply tick the box and send it back to the Guild office as soon as possible."

Liebersohn to Spearhead London Plan

'Looking forward to making Film London a dynamic and stimulating force.'

Top producer **Sandy Liebersohn**, one of the British film industry's best-known moviemakers, has been appointed chairman of the Film Council's new Film London arm charged with representing and developing the film and media industry in the capital, it announced in March.

From April this year Film London takes on the responsibilities of the London Film and Video Development Agency and the London Film Commission, investing in the commissioning and funding of creative and industrial initiatives across the capital.

Liebersohn's responsibilities will cover four significant areas including promotion, training and education, but his main aim will be to encourage and support filmmaking in London. To that end he will be working with the Mayor of London, the London Development Agency, Skillset and the London boroughs in making the new arm 'a dynamic and stimulating force'.

A major player in Europe and America since the 60s,

Liebersohn formed Goodtimes with **David Puttnam** in 1970, and went on to produce a long roster of significant films. Later, as head of production at 20th Century Fox, he supervised the early *Star Wars* films and others by **Herzog, Roeg, Bertolucci, Zinnemann, Kurosawa** and **Ridley Scott**. During the 80s, first at The Ladd Company then at Goldcrest, and after as an independent producer, Liebersohn worked with a new generation of filmmakers defining films like *Blade Runner*, *Once Upon a Time in America*, *Dance With a Stranger*, *Room with a View*, and *The Mission* among many others.

Announcing Liebersohn's appointment, **John Woodward**, the Film Council's CEO said, "London is the base of the UK's film industry. More than 23,000 people in the capital work in the film and video industries making an important contribution to London's economic life. Having Sandy represent the industry will help to cement London's status as one of the film capitals of the world."

Desert War Overshadows 75th Oscars

Boos, cheers and tears And All That Jazz.

DoP Grace Kael writes from somewhere next door to Grauman's Chinese.

This year's Academy Awards at Oscar's new permanent home, the sumptuous and specially designed Kodak Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard, were relatively subdued by any standard - and some would say they were all the better for that.

With the Iraq war casting a worrisome gloom over everything, and as if wanting to get it all over with, the Academy's total concentration was on the nominees and winners in a slick presentation interspersed with short and pithy intros underscored by a few watered-down jokes by emcee **Steve Martin**. Not your usual Vegas all-singin' and dancin' extravaganza, though there was some of that. Oscar was the thing and they simply got on with it without the usual lengthy gas-bagging and upstaging. A surprisingly few winners couldn't resist taking us by the ear to embarrass themselves and us with overcharged political speeches. Biggest (and widest) offender was documentary director **Michael Moore**, whose hectoring harangue of his President got a loud ovation of cheers and boos, with the boos just having it. But it did engender Martin's best joke of the evening, an ad-lib after the extreme-leftie quit the stage: "The teamsters are just helping Michael Moore into the trunk of his limo."

Miramax's **Chicago**, **Harvey Weinstein**, dominated with six awards but, curiously - apart from the most prestigious: Best Picture - not in the most important categories. Those went to Best Actress **Nicole Kidman** for **The Hours**; Best Actor **Adrien Brody** and, surely a triumph, Best Director **Roman Polanski**, both for **The Pianist**. Polanski couldn't be there, of course, as the diminutive director fled Tinseltown for Paris in 1978 rather than appear for sentencing after pleading guilty to drugging and having unlawful sex with a 13-year-old girl. However, such considerations didn't get in the way of the audience's standing ovation.

There were only three awards for Brits, and one of those was an Hon. Best Screenplay went to dignified **Ronald Harwood** for **The Pianist**; Best Supporting Actress went to weepy (well, she is pregnant) **Catherine Zeta Jones** for **Chicago**; and an Honorary Academy Award for the body of his work went to many times nominated but never awarded smoothie **Peter O'Toole**.

And the other awards:
Supporting Actor: **Chris Cooper**,

Adaptation.

Original Screenplay: **Pedro Almodóvar**, *Talk To Her.*

Music Score: **Elliot Goldenthal**, *Frida.*

Music Song: 'Lose Yourself' **8 Mile**, **Eminem**, **Jeff Bass**, **Luis Resto**; Lyric: **Eminem.**

Cinematography: **Conrad L. Hall**, *Road To Perdition.*

Art Direction: **John Myhre**; **Gordon Sim** (Set Decoration), *Chicago.*

Editor: **Martin Walsh**, *Chicago.*

Sound Editing: **Ethan Van der Ryn**, **Michael Hopkins**, *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers.*

Sound: **Michael Minkler**, **Dominick Tavella**, **David Lee**, *Chicago.*

Visual Effects: **Jim Rygiel**, **Joe Letteri**, **Randall William Cook**, **Alex Funke**, *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers.*

Costume: **Colleen Atwood**, *Chicago.*

MakeUp: **John Jackson**, **Beatrice De Alba**, *Frida.*

Animated Feature: *Spirited Away*, **Hayao Miyazaki.**

Foreign Film (Ger): *Nowhere In Africa*, Dir: **Caroline Link.**

Documentary: *Bowling For Columbine*, **Michael Moore**, **Michael Donovan.**

Documentary Short: *Twin Towers*, **Bill Guttentag**, **Robert David Port.**

Animated Short: *The Chubbchubbs!*, **Eric**

Armstrong.

Live Short: *This Charming Man (Der Er En Yndig Mand)*, **Martin Strange-Hansen**, **Mie Andreassen.**



Catherine Zeta Jones receiving the Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in Chicago



Top: Nicole Kidman receiving Award
Bottom: Adrien Brody giving an emotional speech



FC Plan to Enter the Numbers Game

250 screen digi-cinema circuit proposed.

In an initiative that would put Britain at the forefront of digitally-projected cinema exhibition, the Film Council is proposing a scheme to set up a major chain of screens using the new technology throughout the country to offer a viable and comprehensive outlet for British product.

With a proposed investment of some £14m of Council funds, the plan is aimed at expanding the range and accessibility of British films to home audiences. In return for the funding, the Council will reserve cinema screens for approved titles while Exhibitors, who are being asked to contribute to the costs, would be free to screen whatever they liked outside of the selected slots. On regular occasions, the Council plans on taking over the entire circuit for major releases.

If the plan succeeds, the number of UK Indy productions will be

significantly boosted by the move into digital. Distributors will provide cinemas with films on digitally mastered tape at a fraction of the cost of conventional film prints which can cost as much as £1k each.

While the proposed investment is not yet official Council policy, **Peter Buckingham**, the former deputy-honcho at FilmFour, who heads the FC's distribution and exhibition fund, is known to favour the plan and hopes to see screens up and working as early as next year.

The FC's initiative will surely be welcomed by all sides of the production industry, and would make Britain the leader by a considerable margin as the most digitalised country in the world. At the end of last year, according to *Screen Digest*, there were an estimated 161 digital cinema installations at 143 locations around the world.

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Canucks Up Ante

'Keep-on-runnin'' tax incentives to boost production.

Hollywood movie unions were not best pleased last month by news that the Canadian government had decided to increase tax allowances for foreign films shooting in the Confederation. The present rate will be raised by just under 50%.

Reacting, Directors Guild of America spokeswoman **Kathy Garmezy** said, "It proves the point we've been making: this is an industry that everyone wants and that we should keep. Certainly, it says you're right to try and level the playing field," she added, referring to recent US legislative efforts to combat runaway production.

"tax credits had successfully helped develop the Canadian film industry"

The tax kickback, introduced by Canada in 1997 to encourage US runaways to shoot there, will now increase refundable credits to 16%, up from 11%, on eligible Canadian labour costs on international productions filming within their borders.

Explaining their move, the Canadian federal authorities said that tax credits had successfully helped develop the Canadian film industry making it a world-class location for film and video productions.

Simon Says...

"A Nice Day At The Office..."

Usually, it's a very unpleasant feeling to know you're no longer needed, surplus to requirement, on the proverbial scrap heap, as it were. Several weeks ago I made one of my regular calls into the Guild office to ask **Christine Henwood** when she next needed me to drop in - only to be told: "Well, actually, we don't..."

It came as a bit of a shock, but then it suddenly occurred to me that far from feeling slighted, I should actually be pleased. Barely a year ago the GBCT seemed to be a perfect reflection of the film business as a whole, staring into the abyss and stumbling from crisis to crisis. Sixteen months on it looks very different. The air of gloom is gone, the office has been transformed and, thanks to Christine's new broom, even the last admin glitches are now on the verge of being cleared up. At the last AGM the Guild's new accountant, **Ian Ross**, was actually able to report that, based on the way we are going right now, the GBCT is actually in danger of reporting an annual surplus for the first time in several years. Yes, on the whole, I think we have every reason to feel pleased with ourselves.

So where does that leave me? Well, hopefully right back where I started, as an ordinary focus puller (sorry, I mean 1AC) struggling to make a crust. At last, I can finally look forward to worrying about my own problems rather than having to continually field queries about membership, insurance, training, Kelly calculators, the magazine, standing orders, GAS refunds, or whatever. I can't tell you how many times I almost found myself wishing that I had never put my mobile number into the Crew Directory...

Mind you, there are still a few points to be sorted out before the new-look GBCT is complete. We still have to tie up some outstanding constitutional issues that we could not attend to at the AGM in March (PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE get those proxy forms back to the office ASAP). And to complete the final transformation, we are pleased to announce that following **Harvey Harrison's** recent decision to step down as Guild chairman, camera operator **Trevor Coop**, after more years on the Board than anyone can remember, has agreed to stand for election as

chairman at the next Board meeting.

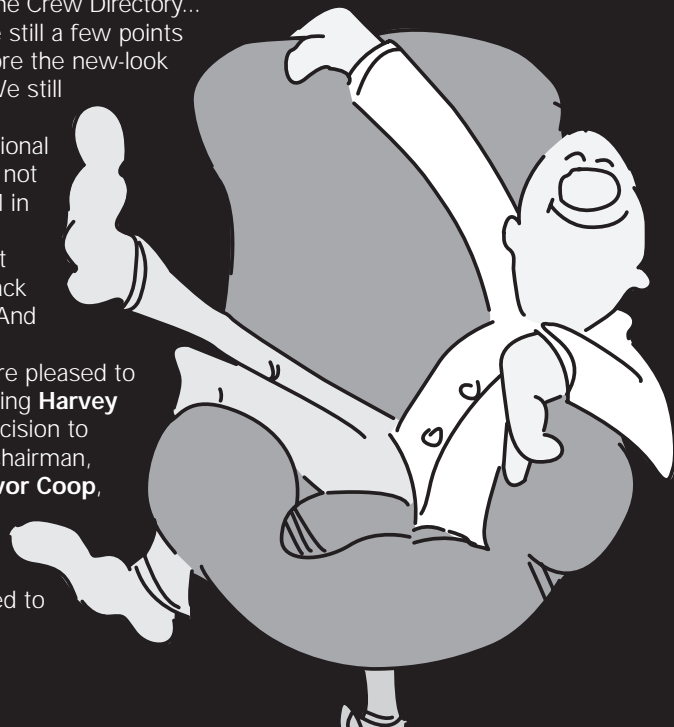
As for Harvey, we ain't seen the last of him just yet. He will be staying on as a member of the Board for the foreseeable future, and will continue to support and work for the Guild as much as his work permits. No one can ever say that his three years at the helm have been uneventful, and normally I'm not one to get overly gushy, but now that he has taken the decision to step down it's only right to say that, for all the plaudits that I have been getting for turning the Guild around, the simple fact is that what has been achieved would not have been possible without Harvey's total support and encouragement. Not only that, but even his occasional absences from Board meetings has helped us to save an absolute fortune on wine bills. So on behalf of the Board, and the entire membership, I'm sure, I would like to say a big thank you to Harvey for everything he's done.

As the last vestiges of the old order are swept away, you will also be pleased to know that this regular column will be a little less noticeable. It's not that I don't have anything to say, but now that Christine has finished reorganising the office I no longer know where anything is. More to the point, I'm now usually too scared even to ask.

So, if in the future you have any queries about anything to do with the running of the GBCT then could I please ask you not to call me on my mobile (unless you're offering me work of course), because you will only get me into trouble.

Arrivederci,

Simon.



From My End of the Wire

As the new girl in Admin, I thought I would keep regular contact with everyone through our invaluable *NewsLetter*.

Along with maintaining and improving the running of the Guild's administrative affairs, I have been promoting the Crew Directory throughout the industry with the intention of seeing that there is a copy in every production office in the country. So make sure you are in it.

Three months down the line, I am finally getting to grips with the business of the Guild, ably assisted by **Rachael Conisbee**, with **Abi Cockcroft** on call whenever required. You'll have noticed, Admin and Gas now run as one, which means you will get either one of us answering the phone to say hello when you call. Now, down to business:

Subs: I'm sure that you are aware that one of my main objectives is to ensure that we have all of our members paying their fees. If I have written to you several times about this, I apologise for nagging but I do have to get these long neglected arrears cleared up.

Regrettably, several people have not responded at all to my requests for payment, and soon I will have no alternative but to assume that they no longer wish to be members of the Guild and have their names listed in the Crew Directory. With a fully administered welfare scheme in operation, there is no reason why members finding it difficult cannot ask me directly for their name to be placed on the welfare list, in which case their subs will be suspended for some considerable time. The Board of Governors guarantee complete discretion and confidentiality in this area. Please call or write to me if this is the case with you.

One other little (big) problem: some members pay by standing order through a company account. Therefore, I haven't a clue as to who/where they are from. If this applies to you, please contact me with your personal details. Ideally, the Guild needs subscriptions set up on a standing order (which will ensure your entry in the Crew Directory).

'03/'04 Crew Directory: You should have received your information forms to fill out for the coming year's edition. It is vital for the directory to have up-to-date information. So, if you have not received this form, please contact Kays NOW on 01753 651171. The Guild will not accept responsibility for any error printed if you have not duly submitted your information.

CVs: Rachael and I would like an up-to date copy of all Gas members CVs. These will soon be posted on our GBCT

Website, which is currently under reconstruction and will offer the industry a detailed listing of all members and their work to date. If you are not a Gas member, perhaps you should think carefully about joining us. If you send us your CV by e-mail, please ensure that it is written in MSWord for PC (and not Mac).

Database corrections: Please inform me immediately if you change your address, telephone, fax or email details. I cannot update the database or send you information if this crucial information is incorrect - and I don't want you to miss out on any of the new promotions we may be offering! Keep your eyes open for them!

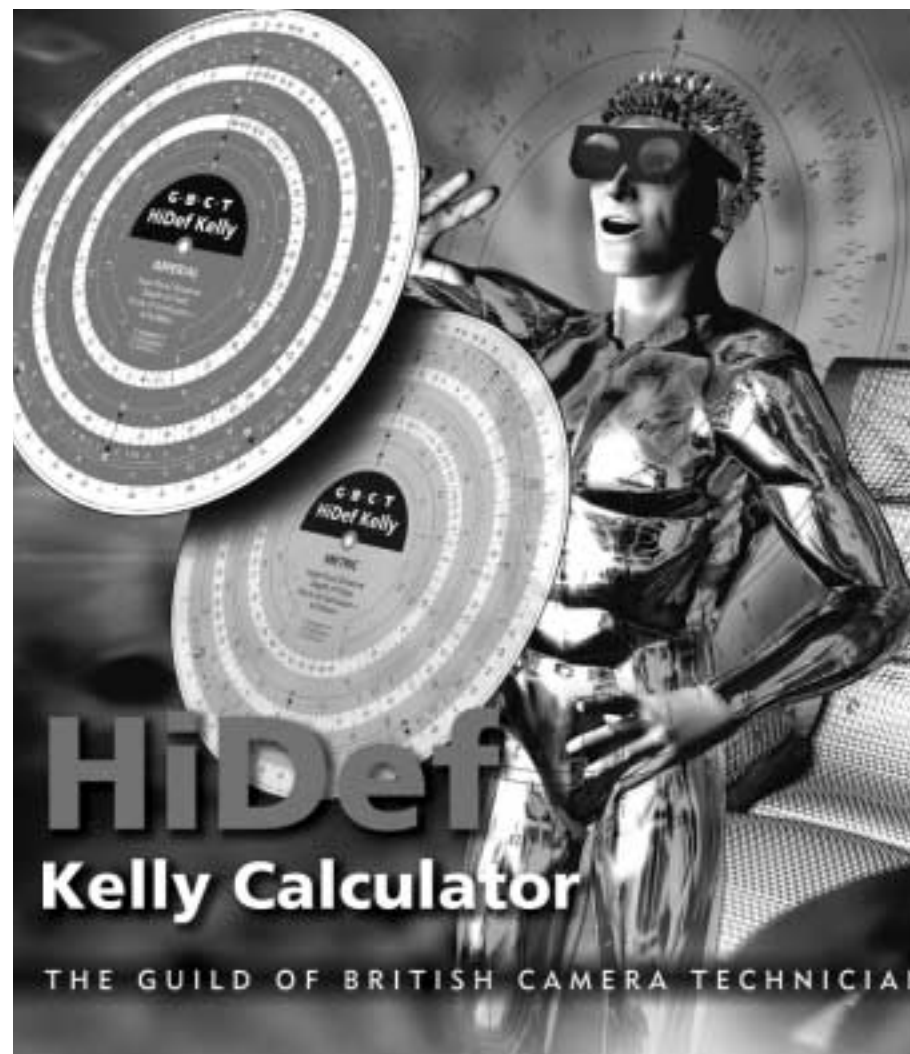
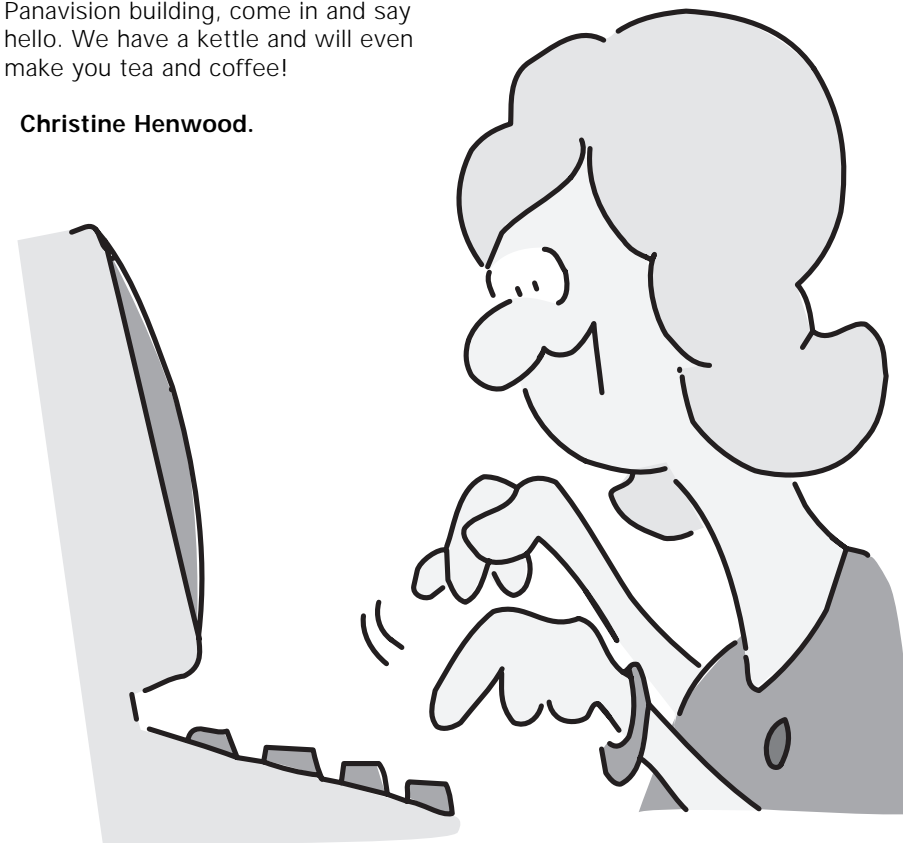
Gas: When I joined the Guild, I was quite surprised to see that not all of you support the Guild's diary service. This is improving by the day and becoming more popular with the amount of promotion I have been doing. As a result, I am looking forward to welcoming new members before too long. Why not phone the office now and see what 'offers' we have to tempt you to join - like our one-third discount to those working beyond an eight-week contract. Call us **020 8813 1999**.

Cine Guilds Of Great Britain: There is to be an e-mail information line for the Cine Guild. If you want to be on the

circulation list, please let me know.

So, that's all for now. Please keep in touch with the office and let us know what you're doing and if you're in the Panavision building, come in and say hello. We have a kettle and will even make you tea and coffee!

Christine Henwood.



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Broken wings...

It's a sad list: **Paul Mantz**, **Frank Tallman**, **Albert Lamorisse**, **Guy Tabary**, **Skeets Kelly**, **Gilbert Chomat**, **John Crewdson**, **Johnny Jordan**, among many others, I'm sure. How tragic now to add the name of **Matthew Allwork** to that roster of cameramen and pilots who have died while filming from the air. Having taken up the reins of **Dad Peter Allwork's** aerial filming company, which Peter, with his many spectacular contributions to films like the Oscar-winning **Out of Africa**, had made one of the best in the world, Matthew went on to make his own name in the air and on the ground - receiving quite a few awards in doing so - only to lose his life recently at the tragically young age of 39 in a helicopter crash in Dubai. And while writing about those who died in the saddle, I mustn't forget the incredibly brave news-cameramen who were recently killed covering the war in Iraq: **Tara Protsyuk**, 35, a Ukrainian working for Reuters; **Jose Couso**, 37, a Spaniard working for Telecinco; **Kaveh Golestan**, 51, an Iranian working for the BBC; and **Paul Moran**, 39, an Ozzie working for the ABC. What can one say...

A shot in the dark...

Three hot-dogs, three regular cokes, two packets of sweets and a small tub of popcorn: £17! Plus the price of the seats £15! Thirty-two quid for two adults and a kid at the local multiplex, the Warner in Park Royal! Makes you think there's something in the Greek tycoon's crazy idea of bringing ridiculously cheap cinema to the masses, doesn't it. Putting his money where his mouth is, **Stelios Haji-loannou's** no-frills easyCinema has leased the first site in the roll-out of its low cost movie concept: UCI's 10-screen multiplex, The Point, in Milton Keynes. Starting to show films at the end of May, tickets will be sold for as little as 20p if booked a month in advance, though prices will increase as show-time gets closer. The Point will have no box office as all sales will be made online. There will also be a computer in the lobby for the purchase of tickets. Even Stelios is describing the venture as a controlled experiment. "I've made many mistakes by rolling things out too fast," he says, "so I'm going to sit on my hands for six months to a year before I try another cinema." I cannot believe it will succeed, but I've never hoped more fervently to be wrong.

'One day those prints will go . . .'

It was astonishing to read that these days a major release can be so wide that it takes no less than 8,500 prints to cover it. Thus it was for the U.S. alone with **Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets**, which opened just before Christmas. If you want to know whether or not the film over digital quality argument has been won or lost: forget the quality argument and figure out the figures. That's 8,500 times, what, seven, eight hundred quid per print (not including storage and shipping costs)? Equals £6,375,000! Or 8,500 times, what, seventy-five quid per reusable encrypted HiDef tape (not including a first class stamp) - equals £637,500? Those who pay will decide, and we know where producers hearts lie...

Touched for the very last time?

My personal vote for the **Blake Edwards/Bryan Forbes/Muhammad al-Sahhaf Award For Denial In The Face Of Grim Reality** goes to director **Guy Ritchie** for casting **Madonna** in the lead role (what else?) of his critical and financial disaster movie, **Swept Away**. Elsewhere in the NewsLetter, Ritchie is quoted as

"The idea was that the wife and I would make some sassy little art movie, but we got the shit kicked out of us"

saying: "The idea was that the wife and I would make some sassy little art movie, but we got the shit kicked out of us!" Come, come now, Guy. Didn't they tell you - nobody kicks the shit out of **Madge!**

But we smell as sweet...

What a nice little tribute by the editor, printed in the bi-annual edition of the Guild of Television Cameramen's swank magazine **Zerb**: "Within a year of the introduction of the Sony HDW F700 the Guild of British Camera Technicians

suggested to its members that the current naming of camera assistants as focus-puller and clapper/loader should revert to the older names of first-assistant cameraperson (1AC) and second-assistant cameraperson (2AC). This I believe was both sensible and significant. The GBCT saw that HD was a reality and that many of its members would be working in this area. Renaming their grades would help them gain work in these new parts of the industry. It is not often that one sees an established industry guild look forwards rather than hang on stridently to the past and I, for one, commend them for an almost unique foresight."

A tardy farewell...

Sorry to discover that **Patrick 'Paddy' Aherne**, a very well-known camera technician of yore, passed from us in June last year at the age of 74. For some reason, though Paddy was a long-standing member of the Guild, this information was never given to us, hence this late notice. Starting as a clapstick-operator in the Forties, most notably on **Oliver Twist**, among others, Paddy progressed through the grades to camera operator, enjoying that job so much that he never wanted to pick up the light-meter. Retired to Ireland for over ten years, though eventually returning to London, his last job was on director **Mike Dryhurst's** 1979 Irish-set film **The Hard Way**. He is survived by his wife Norma and two sons: 1AD, **Tony Aherne** and sound-mixer **Brian Aherne**.

The best of comedies...

One of the funniest films I ever saw - which to my knowledge was never re-released or run on television and that, consequently, I never saw again - was an Anglo-Italian co-production called **The Best of Enemies** (dir **Guy Hamilton** 1961). Set in World War II, it had a roster of able actors led by **David Niven** and **Michael Wilding**, supported by a whole team of those British second-bananas who populated every British war movie since the dam' thing ended: **Harry Andrews**, **Ronnie Fraser** - well you know the rest. But the film - a mainly Italian-written account of the hilarious changes of fortune of two British and Italian units unwillingly fighting one

another in occupied Ethiopia - was absolutely stolen by an Italian genius of a comic actor: **Alberto Sordi**. An Oscar-winning performance by a comic actor - if they ever gave Oscars to comic actors back then. Why this gem of a film was allowed to wither and slide forgotten into oblivion I'll never know. Sordi played the Italian contestant (what else?) in **Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines**. In a career spanning seven decades and more than 150 films, he was their **Peter Sellers** to the Italians and was 84 when he died last month. **Sophia Loren** said: "Alberto was our greatest comic actor. He leaves us with a melancholy for times gone by." I thought you'd like to know.

What price a Bafta?

Just when the Bafta Awards were becoming established as a meaningful ceremony on a par with the Golden Globes (if not the Oscars), it's hard to believe Bafta would shoot itself in the foot by admitting that, under its rules, a television company can actually buy a television nomination by paying the Academy £500! (See report elsewhere in the NL). Only in a country that has suffered for centuries under the decree of establishment worthies telling its citizenry just what is good for them, and what they can eat or drink or read or see, and precisely when and where and under what circumstances they can do these things, could an Academy get away with effectively telling its membership that, in certain cases and over their heads, its elitist awards committee knows best what should be nominated or awarded - and, moreover, insist that such decisions are private and of no concern to the membership. I'd love to see them try that in America! What the Bafta should do now, before it's too late, is throw out its unelected 'award juries'; its elitist, money-grubbing, disgraceful 'fast-track' scheme; and the member who came up with the idea in the first place! Just like the American Academy, if the awards are to have any meaning at all they must be selected by vote of the full membership. Er...it's called democracy. (Is that the distant rumble of tumbrels I hear?)

Anglo-US Team Sets Records at 23rd Razzies

Ritchie and Madonna Swept Away in several categories.

DoP Luc Theroux reports from the beach.

In an ultra low-budget ceremony, Britain and America's golden couple, director **Guy Ritchie** and singer/actress wife **Madonna**, dominated this year's Golden Razzie Awards held on Oscar Eve at Santa Monica's Sheraton Hotel.

Ritchie was named as 2002's Worst Director for **Swept Away**, but the film - despite the handicap of having a beautiful megastar singer in its leading role - also garnered a record double nod as the Worst Movie and the Worst Remake of the year. Madonna was also cited in an unprecedented win-treble achievement: Worst Actress (tied with **Britney Spears** for **Crossroads**) in **Swept Away**; Worst Screen Couple, Madonna and co-star **Adriano Giannini** in the same film; and Worst Supporting Actress in **Die Another Day**. With a US take of just over \$599k, Ritchie's film was also noted as the lowest-grossing Worst Picture Razzie winner in the history of the award. Not to be outdone, Madonna also set a new Razzie career record for a female artist with no less than 9 wins and 15 nominations - a triumph that will surely



stand for decades to come.

In a recent Guardian interview, Ritchie confirmed that **Swept Away** would go straight to video. "It won't be released in the UK because it's shit," he said. "The idea was that the wife and I would make some sassy little art movie, but we got the shit kicked out of us. It must be the first film to make front page news with a review. 21 papers ran a story on how appalling it was. But I've got to say I still think it's a good film. I'm left shaking my head."

Other dazed winners of a gilded golf-ball-sized Raspberry were:

Worst Actor: **Roberto Benigni** in **Pinocchio**.

Worst Supporting Actor: **Hayden Christensen** **Star Wars Ep II: Attack Of The Clones**.

Worst Screenplay: **George Lucas**, **Jonathan Hales** **Star Wars Ep II: Attack Of The Clones**.

Most Flatulent Teen-Targeted Movie: **Jackass: The Movie** (Paramount).

Worst Original Song: **Britney Spears** for "I'm Not a Girl, Not Yet a Woman" **Crossroads**.



UK/US Majors Spook Hook-Up Ground-breaking trans-Atlantic operation.

An as yet untitled drama series to play simultaneously in both countries has been agreed by Granada UK and ABC in America.

Announcing the project recently in both London and Los Angeles, the companies said they have come together to develop a one-hour espionage drama from screenwriter **Michael Frost Beckner** (**Spy Game**, **The Agency**) in answer to the ever downward pressure on production costs in both countries. The bilateral deal will considerably reduce costs to each company by sharing them equally.

Centring on a covert MI6/CIA/Special Forces group and depicting many aspects

of espionage activity including special operations, the series will be set in London, Washington DC, and other locations around the world.

"Now is the ideal time to look at new ways of producing primetime drama series," commented **Simon Shaps**, Granada's production honcho. "We're developing a show which explores Britain and America's fight against global terrorism - a subject with clear appeal on both sides of the Atlantic. The opportunity to share costs also adds to the attraction of the idea."

Production dates are yet to be announced.

Miramax Euro Bound

Oscar-machine to make 'more family movies'.

Miramax Films production ambitions across Europe are being fuelled by the return to London from New York of **Colin Vaines**, their EVP of Production and Development.

Working alongside New York-based co-exec **Julie Goldstein**, Vaines is fast-tracking several Europe-set titles on Miramax's growing slate, Vaines said last month. The Miramax company, an Oscar and Bafta-winning phenomenon, will increase its commitment to "making family movies" on its next production slate, leading such projects with an adaptation of **Jonathan Stroud's** adventure *The Amulet of Samarkand*. The first in the *Bartimaeus Trilogy*, the book, set against the backdrop of London in a parallel universe ruled by magicians, is a classic kids' story and details the adventures of a young magician who conjures up a disgruntled genie. Another subject is a big-screen adaptation of Miramax-published novel *Artemis Fowl* which, written by Vaines, **Larry Guterma**n will direct. The project, following the adventures of a crafty 12-year-old boy immersed in a world of fairies, leprechauns and gnomes, will be produced by Tribeca Films partners **Jane Rosenthal** and **Robert De Niro**.

Miramax is also stepping up development on **Philip Pullman's** novel *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*, which details a young girl's quest through exotic lands to become a maker of fireworks like her father. Other titles on the fast track through the company's European operations include *Newton's Law*, a story about Isaac Newton, who once worked as a warden at the Royal Mint, foiling a counterfeit ring during his stint there. Vaines and Goldstein are also fast-tracking an adaptation of **Allison Pearson's** book *I Don't Know How She*



Does It, the story of a professional woman who juggles a career, marriage and children against the hectic world of big business. Also in development is *Four Knights*, "*A Man for All Seasons* meets *Trainspotting*," says Vaines. "Although historical, it has a contemporary voice," he added. "Four knights try to kill the Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Beckett in 12th-century England." Vaines returned to London after more than three years at the company's Tribeca headquarters in New York. He spent more than eight months on set with **Martin Scorsese's** *Gangs of New York* and aims to work with the director again on his upcoming documentary on British cinema.

Top: Robert De Niro
Bottom: Jane Rosenthal
Both will be producing the adaption of Colin Vaines novel, Artemis Fowl

TV-COs Buy Bafta Noms

'Fast Track' ticket side-steps voting members.

A recent article in *The Telegraph* revealed how television companies pay thousands of pounds to Bafta to get their otherwise rejected prestige productions nominated for an award. The recent Television Award ceremonies may have honoured shows that were in the running only because of payments of £500 'fast-tracking' fees even though the productions were passed over for consideration by Bafta's 2,700 voting members.

Programs, including the television version of *Doctor Zhivago* and *I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!*, the reality television show, were nominated only after ITV paid an extra £1,000 to have them 'fast-tracked' for consideration.

The disclosure that Bafta allows television companies to pay for 'extra' awards nominations has shocked many academy members who - like the viewing public - were under the impression that all the programs shortlisted for prizes were chosen entirely on merit.

Actress **Maureen Lipman** (*The Pianist*), who was a guest presenter at the recent Bafta film awards, said: "I had no idea that this was even going on. To ask anyone to pay for a nomination is ludicrous and I hope Bafta juries know which programs are paid for and which ones are not." **Dick Clement**, co-writer of *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*, which was in contention with *Doctor Zhivago*, said: "I had no idea anything like this went on. I thought there was a lot of lobbying and jockeying behind closed doors but not a system like this." However, **Tony Marchant**, who wrote the BBC2 drama *Holding On*, winner of the 1998 Bafta for Best Drama Serial, claimed last night that most award-winning programs - including his own - had been fast-tracked.

He said: "I know *Holding On* was fast-tracked by the BBC after members failed to nominate it. Most programs which win Baftas have not been chosen by the membership. I don't have a problem with that. I think it is absolutely reasonable because Bafta members make very perverse choices about what they think are the best programs."

The payment for nominations system is available to all four British terrestrial broadcasters and Sky television for 15 of the 20 available categories with all companies and broadcasters paying an initial £200 entry fee for every program they enter for an award. A list of these programs is then sent to members, who vote on all 15 categories. The top four chosen in each are then put forward to be considered for

an award by a Bafta prize jury.

However, in the 15 fast-track categories, each broadcaster is also allowed to nominate an extra program for consideration by the prize jury - in return

"I had no idea that this was even going on. To ask anyone to pay for a nomination is ludicrous and I hope Bafta juries know which programs are paid for and which ones are not."

for a payment of £500. The Bafta jurors are not told which of the programs have been fast-tracked.

This year the BBC's *Tipping the Velvet* and *Daniel Deronda* were originally nominated by Bafta members, while *Doctor Zhivago* was not. ITV then paid for

Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here! and *Lads' Army*, neither of which was originally nominated by Bafta's membership, were later included. Both then made it to onto the final shortlists.

A spokesman for Bafta last night defended the fast-track scheme, which she insisted was totally within the rules of the academy. However, she refused to identify any programs that had been fast-tracked, claiming that it was a private matter for the academy and broadcasters.

Although the practice has astonished many in the industry, there are plenty who support it claiming that the academy has an in-built bias towards the BBC which somehow needs to be addressed.

Stephen Poliakoff, the dramatist, a Bafta Fellow and member of the judging panel for this year's Best Single Drama award, last night confirmed that he was not told which of the eight long-listed programs were nominated by members and which had bought its place on the list. He defended the fast-track scheme. "Bafta members are either very elderly and see nothing after 10pm, or they work in the business and do not get a chance to see the programs. Fast-tracking is a corrective measure that enables the most interesting work to be nominated: otherwise there's a danger the event would be too mainstream."

The BBC confirmed that it had also fast-



The Pianist - Maureen Lipman (far left), Julia Rayner (left), Adrien Brody (centre), Ed Stoppard (back right), Frank Finlay (right) and Jessica Kate Meyer (far right).
Photo by Guy Ferrandis

the latter to be added to the list of nominees. When the list was whittled down to four, both BBC dramas were rejected but *Doctor Zhivago* was included. The Bafta jury then chose the winner by secret ballot, ensuring that none knew which program had won. (In the event, the award went to Channel 4's *Shackleton*).

ITV has also admitted that it paid to ensure that its series *I'm A*

tracked programs but refused to discuss which ones.

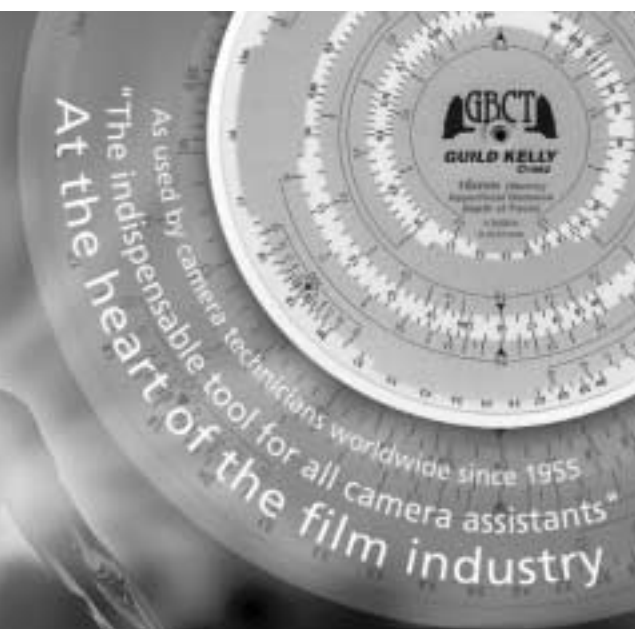
A spokesman for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills, which presides over the Oscars, confirmed that it did not ask entrants to pay an entry fee and said that all shortlists were drawn up solely by the membership.

Edited and adapted from an article by Chris Hastings and Susan Bisset in *The Telegraph*, April 13, 2003

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LETTERS

Underscrewing...

London, SE.
Name withheld by request.

Dear Charles,
I've just been working as a 2AC on a commercial for a very large production company for a very well known client.

It was a planned single camera shoot, but after only an hour on Day One they ordered in a second camera. They also called in a second 1AC, but he couldn't arrive before two hours. Consequently, I found myself having to assemble, load and lace the second camera whilst the first camera was shooting

continuously. People were screaming for the second camera whilst I tried to catch up with providing loaded magazines for both. (They were using 400' rolls, so I was constantly in the changing-bag).

When things calmed down a little, the main camera 1AC suggested calling in another 2AC for the second camera. The DoP agreed with him, but the producer was adamant that this was not required.

She came to discuss this with me while I was in the bag, when I politely asked her if we could discuss the matter when I wasn't concentrating on the reload. (I've never been able to talk to people while in

the bag). But in the event I was so busy that I didn't get the chance to discuss it with her any further.

To cut a long story short, the producer - having suffered the effrontery of being told by someone with eight years loading experience that they might know what they're on about, coupled with a perceived snub - fired me from the job!

The climate of fear meant that the DoP obviously felt himself unable to fight my corner, and didn't even mention to me that I was about to be fired. However, in these lean times, I can understand his need to keep a good relationship with the

company, and he did ring to apologise to me the same evening.

I don't know if this story has a message, other than trying one's best to save a production time and money can lead to one's dismissal.

With kind regards from a confused and disillusioned 1AC.

(Yes, that's how quiet it is. I've had to go back to loading!)

Sad reading for those of us who remember the days when only a DoP could fire a member of the camera-crew. Sic transit gloria mundi. Ho hum... CB.

Frazier Lens Patent Revoked U.S. Judge: 'false and misleading statements' were made.

The U.S. patent for Australian nature photographer **James Frazier's** wide-angle, deep-focus Frazier Lens was ruled 'invalid and unenforceable' by a District Court Judge in an April decision. The ruling was the result of a lawsuit brought by Frazier in October 1999 against German lens maker P-S Technick and two New York companies that leased their lenses claiming they too closely resembled the Frazier lens.

The lens won a technical Oscar in 1997 but Judge Gary Feess in his ruling said that Frazier had "made materially false and misleading statements" to the U.S. patent examiner.

Panavision, who carry the Frazier lens in its inventory, was not a party to the lawsuit and the recent decision does not effect its availability.

Commercial photographer **Steven Moses** said he'd been using the Frazier lens for about five years for close-up, table top food photography. He said the lens does allow for a "great depth of field," but its key feature was that its end-piece swivels in different directions without moving the camera. "You can put the lens almost anyplace you want to put it. It's still unique and people will continue to use it."

Counsel for Frazier said his client intends to appeal the decision.

"You can put the lens almost anyplace you want to put it. It's still unique and people will continue to use it."



BBC Assesses HiDef Production Savings

'As much as 25% over S16 – as much as 78% over 35mm'!

To make it easier for BBC productions considering a switch to HiDef, **Andy Quested**, the BBC's Head of Production Development, has costed the savings to be made when shooting HiDef for television drama. He stated, "We compared HiDef with Digi-Beta, Super16 and 35mm, though the real comparison was with Super16. The main areas affected are camera hire and stock, edit preparation and how we delivered it."

The first series of **Judge John Deed**, starring **Martin Shaw**, was shot on Digi-Beta. For the second series the BBC wanted to see how well the HDCAM camcorder could slot into existing standard definition productions and conducted tests during the production in the summer of 2002.

"We found that using the HDW-F900 camera there was a 12 per cent saving with camera hire and stock. Using the HDW-750P there could be as much as a 25 per cent saving," Quested says.

This analysis has been extended by Sony to make a direct comparison across four specific areas of production and post to see what savings can be made by switching to HiDef. The results show that shooting with the high-end CineAlta HDW-F900 camera and post producing on HDCAM is 20 per cent cheaper than shooting with Super16 and post producing on Digital Betacam, and 78 per cent cheaper than shooting with 35mm and post producing on Digital Betacam.

The figures are based on a typical 16-week shoot of eight one-hour episodes of a drama series. *Judge John Deed* is just one of a number of television productions that have tested out HiDef. The second series of **Rockface**, in production in Scotland, is

shooting entirely with Panavision Cine-Alta HDW-F900 cameras hired from Panavision.

"HiDef - it's not film but it's not video, it's something in the middle"

The original CineAlta tests were done during the set up of BBC Drama's **Tomorrow La Scala!** produced by **Ruth Caleb** and directed by **Francesca Joseph**. Caleb says, "I'm a sucker for anything new and anything that can be useful for drama," she says. "Creatively, I was interested to see how a director would cope with HD. It has a great look and you don't have all the processing [of film]." ITV's long running drama series, **The Bill**, has also tested the HDW-750P with a view to switching from Digi-Beta production. "We know that within two years we will need to change format. It can't happen overnight," says **Paul Marquess**, the show's executive producer, "but we want to be fully prepared."

In a further effort to help productions to use HiDef cameras, the BBC Training arm is running HD courses for anyone in the industry to train up to HD production.

Bill Hollins, series producer of Channel 4's **Robot Wars** completed the course. "I was struck by the sheer versatility of HiDef - it's not film but it's not video, it's something in the middle," he says. "The crew has got to be well trained but it's easy to use and it looks sensational. I was very surprised. I'm sold, I'll use it whenever I can."

Gestating or Hatching in the UK

FC lashes out for the big screen.

UK film production companies received a new cash boost in March to develop a slew of high quality feature films for British and international cinema audiences as the Film Council announced it is investing £1,171,000 in seven company slate deals.

The FC's Development Fund, which recently announced its investment in a range of new single film projects, has agreed to put money into several prolific production outfits all with a wide and diverse range of scripts for the big screen.

The FC is seed-funding seven projects including an as yet untitled movie centring on the last days of **Jimi Hendrix**, dir/wri **Paul Greengrass**; wri **Oliver Parker**; pro **Jenny Borgars**. Biggest award goes to writer **Meera Syal** with producer partner **Paul Raphael** developing their latest untitled project set in a small Irish village close to where Air India Flight 182 crashed into the sea in 1985. FC funds are also backing a remake of the horror film **The Witchfinder General**, set during the English Civil War and based on the true story of witch-persecutor **Matthew Hopkins**;

Francesca Barra and **Selwyn Roberts** will produce for First Sight Films with **Charles Sturridge** as exec producer.

Money too for writer-director **John McKay** and producer **Lee Thomas's** **Ghosthunters** project billed as a teen action-adventure set in the 20s - a parapsychologist discovers a way of talking to ghosts with the aid of a young female psychic. **Mrs. Ratcliffe's Revolution**, written by

Peter Straughan produced by **Leslee Udwin** and **Peter Flannery** also gets a dip for the romantic comedy following one family's journey from Sixties East Midlands to a freezing East Germany and back.

Working Title and Welsh screen agency Sgrin Cymru Wales will also receive a cash injection for director **Marc Evans** and producer **Jon Finn's** **Hunky Dory**, set in Swansea during the '76 heat wave; the story focusing on a teacher attempting to get a gang of kids to take part in a rock music extravaganza. The last of the FC funding will go to writer **Paul Tamasy** for his adaption of **The Dark**. **John Fawcett** will direct and **Jeremy Bolt** produce. The film deals with a grieving family that moves to a remote village in Wales to recover from the loss of a child, only to uncover the macabre history of their new house.

FC favoured companies are Autonomous (£216k); Company Films (£130k); Ecosse Films (£250k); Gruber Films (£100k); Kuhn & Co (£250k); October Films (£75k); and Recorded Picture Company (£150k).

Barry Pepper and **Tom Wilkinson** are pretty much set to topline a still untitled indy movie based on **Patricia Highsmith's** novel **Ripley Under Ground**; dir **Roger Spottiswoode**; it is the second novel in Highsmith's book series centring on suave psychopath Tom Ripley, set in the contemporary art world in London; the project aims to go into production at the beginning of June.

Rachael's Ringaround

This Edition: Camera Operators

The following details were compiled from information given directly by those members who answered their phones or called back after receiving a message. Members are of course invited to contact the office at any time with any material for publication. We are indebted to **Rachael Conisbee** for her efforts.

Simon Baker has been working on various commercials and promos. **Nick Beeks-Sanders** was recently on **Cambridge Spies**; just finished on **Fungus the Bogeyman** (DoP **Stephon Ivanov**; dir **Stuart Hall**). **David Budd** starting **Merseybeat** soon, two series back to back. **Peter Cavaciuti** has just returned from a six-month stint in LA working A camera and steadicam on Universal's **The Cat in the Hat**, starring **Mike Myers** (who, for the whole time, took the mickey out of Peter's accent (DoP **Emmanuel Lubezki**; dir **Bo Welsh**). **Trevor Coop** is starting **Troy**, starring **Brad Pitt** and **Peter O'Toole**, filming on location in Mexico, Malta and Shepperton until September.

Simon Finney is on **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban**, at Leavesden until October. **Ian Foster** has spent the last six months on **Keen Eddie** (DoP **Martin Kenzie**; dir **Simon West**) on the main unit and directing 2nd-unit. **Geoff Glover** is still at work (and has been for the last three years) on **Blues Clues**, a children's TV series, entirely blue-screen work; has also been lighting it. **Rodrigo Gutierrez** was working on **The Extraordinary League of Gentleman** in Prague, which took him up to Christmas last; now working on **Lynda Le Plante's Trial and Retribution**. **Jamie Harcourt** is on **Rosemary**

and Thyme (starring **Felicity Kendall** and **Pam Ferris**; dir **Paul Englefield**), shooting for twelve weeks until the beginning of June.

Gordon Hayman, topping up his tan, is in Spain on **The Bridge of San Luis Rey** (starring **Robert De Niro**, **Harvey Keitel**, **Kathy Bates** and **Gabriel Burns**) until mid-June. **Martin Hume** has been very busy working until Christmas last on **The League of Extraordinary Gentleman** in Prague; gigging on dailies at the beginning of the year on **Carrie's War**, **Tombr Raider II** and **The World of Tomorrow**; about to start two weeks of nights on the 2nd-unit of **Thunderbirds** at Pinewood. **Tony Jackson** worked on **Black Ball** in December, and has been busy on commercials, including an **MM** commercial for the American market; currently in Manchester on another commercial, doing steadicam as well as operating. **Steven Hall** is on **World of Tomorrow**, starring **Gwyneth Paltrow** and **Jude Law** at Elstree Studios; hoping to start shooting VFX for **Troy**. **Martin Foley** is due to start on **Prime Suspect 6** for ten weeks on location in London; has been working dailies on commercials, **Foyles War** and 2nd-unit on **40Something**.

Peter Versey has been doing dailies on 2nd-unit of **Spooks**. **Mark Treays** is currently on **Single** (TV), starring **Michelle Collins** for Tiger Aspect Productions; will start on **Casualty** two weeks after completing that. **John Palmer** has been on several commercials. **Peter Talbot** has just completed **The Extraordinary League of Gentleman** as DoP on the VFX unit shooting in London's Docklands; now doing bits and pieces on

Thunderbirds. **Philip Sindall** is working on **Thunderbirds** at Pinewood. **Paul Robinson** has been rushed off his feet with a new addition to the family, born last July (welcome to the world Martha Eve); Mum has gone back to work and Paul is left holding the baby...literally); in between changing nappies and winding, has been lighting/operating on corporate films and TV.

Chris Plevin is off to the Dominican Republic for six weeks with **Auf Wiedersehen Pet**, then back to finish shooting here until August. **John Maskall** starts on **Touch of Frost** in mid-April (DoP **Peter Jackson**); then on to **B for Bath**, a follow up to **A for Acid** for Yorkshire Television (DoP **Robin Vidgeon**); and after that (!), a follow up to the TV drama **The Quest**, on to a yet to be named subject (dir **David Jason**). **Andrew McDonnell** is about to start a third series of **Born and Bred** at Bray Studios and on location in Lancashire, which will take him through to December. **Julian Morson** has been working on the second series of **Spooks** since September, due to finish in May. **Roger Pearce** is currently on **Around the World in Eighty Days** on location in Thailand (DoP **Harvey Harrison**).

Tim Wooster is working 2nd-unit on **World of Tomorrow**; recently on dailies with the main unit of **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban**; pre-Christmas was photographing 2nd-unit of **Cold Mountain**. **Tony Woodcock** said that he has found the year a little bleak so far; has been finishing his own thirty-minute corporate video. **Sean Savage** just finished a five-month gig on **Keen Eddie** at Elstree Studios (DoP **Martin Kenzie**).

WELFARE FUND

Members are reminded that the Welfare Fund exists specifically to help those experiencing financial difficulties. Please do not hesitate to call or write to the Admin Office if you wish to ask for some assistance. All requests will be handled with the utmost discretion.

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