In color: flowing academic robes, they passed into the grand hall, ascended the proscenium and assumed seats laid out in a fashion reminiscent of a gathering of Supreme Court justices to mark one of the most important moments in the history of the School of Cinema-Television: the first-ever seating of its 12 endowed chairs.

To the cheers and applause of hundreds of scholars, alumni, students, family members and supporters gathered in the Frank Sinatra Hall, the school set an academic record on October 24, installing eight new chairs to expand its funded academic ranks to 12—the largest number of endowed professorships among leading U.S. film schools.

The positions, which run the gamut from editing to interactive entertainment to race and popular culture, honor some of the nation's leading practitioners and theorists in film, television and interactive media as well as recognize the importance of the areas in which they specialize.

“...the history of endowed chairs in higher education stretches back over half a millennium,” said Stanley Gold, president and CEO of Shamrock Holdings, Inc., and chairman of the USC Board of Trustees, who was the keynote speaker at the evening’s event. “And here at USC they have played a vital role in cementing this university’s reputation as a world-class center for research and artistic practice.”

The School of Cinema-Television installed its first chair in 1993, with the creation of the Steven J. Ross/Time Warner Endowed Dean’s Chair, currently held by Elizabeth M. Daley.

“The foresight and generosity of chair donors have been key elements in sustaining our position at the leading edge of professional schools,” said Daley. “Their investment yields results across the..." (continued on page 3)

Sage Council

As students they soaked up the knowledge and wisdom of their professors, mentors and peers. As professionals they ventured forth to help shape the art and industry of film, television and new media.

Now as seasoned vets, a group of former USC students is infusing the school with their own wealth of knowledge and experience through the newly formed Alumni Development Council.

Building on the momentum of the school’s 75th anniversary, the 23-member council held its inaugural session last summer and has representatives from graduating classes that stretch back to 1976 and up to 1999.

In total, their expertise runs the gamut: writers, editors, producers, cinematographers, directors, agents, executives and other entertainment industry professionals.

By serving as advisors, the group seeks to build upon the school’s legacy and strengthen it through a number of initiatives. Among them are enhancing the relationship between the school and the industry; aiding students to make their transition from their academic to professional pursuits; assisting in alumni community development and attracting alumni donors; and consulting on academic and industry resources.

By drawing participants from all echelons of the entertainment world, the council aims to include both up-and-coming as well as established members. (continued on page 4)

Literacy Beyond Words

The Institute for Multimedia Literacy (IML), which conducts research on how to effectively communicate and educate with digital media, has joined the School of Cinema-Television as part of a major initiative to spread multimedia teaching throughout the entire university.

Formerly a project of the Annenberg Center for Communication, USC's senior administration expanded the IML into an Organized Research Unit (ORU) within Cinema-Television last fall.

"...Today's digital environment is making us rethink the notion that literacy is defined solely through a mastery of the written word," said Dean Elizabeth M. Daley, who also serves as the IML's executive director. "Videos, interactive games, Websites, cell phones and countless other ‘new media’ are a large part of our contemporary..." (continued on page 4)
Hundreds of the entertainment industry's prime movers flocked to the School of Cinema-Television last fall to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the very institution that launched them on their trek to the stars; the Peter Stark Producing Program.

Gathering on October 2 as one large family in the 365-seat Frank Sinatra Hall, they shared memories of times and people past, as well as tales from the present—and in the true spirit of the program—made connections for the future.

After defining Art Murphy as the program’s father and Ray Stark as its godfather “in its most classically Hollywood style,” Francis McCarthy ’81 elicited laughter from the audience with his further portrait of Murphy as “a cranky arbitrary word-Nazi” who deemed the use of the word “movie” an anathema. Recalling Murphy’s brusque style and less-than-subtle interpersonal skills, McCarthy said he often thinks of Mel Brooks' classic character Franz Liebkind in The Producers. “Art had the stubble and the height. All he needed was the helmet,” McCarthy laughed, saying that Murphy, “unshaven, probably unwashed and lighting his non-stop lethal Salems” left him with an indelible impression.

McCarthy was one of several speakers to celebrate the people who made it possible for the program’s graduates to achieve their successes. The evening included Peter Stark Producing Program Chair Larry Turman, Editor-n-Chief of Variety Peter Bart, Smallville Executive Producer Al Gough ’94, Agent Gregory McKnight ’94 and Dean Elizabeth M. Daley.

“Everybody is here because someone took a risk,” noted Gough, whose résumé, in addition to being executive producer of Smallville, includes the feature films Spiderman 2 and Lethal Weapon 4.

Pointing out that “Starkies” are everywhere, Gough told the audience that “not a day goes by that I don’t talk to someone from the Stark program.” He commented that the competition that existed between classmates only made each of them better and lauded the teachings of the entertainment community that instructed them. “They produced us,” he said.

The following four professors were promoted from visiting to assistant professors in the Division of Interactive Media:

STEVE ANDERSON
JULIAN BLEECKER
TRACY FULLERTON
CHRIS SWAIN

The Division of Critical Studies welcomed Akira Mizuta Lippit, who joined the faculty as a full professor. He also is a professor of Comparative Literature and of East Asian Languages and Cultures in the College of Letters, Arts & Sciences.
boards—from teaching, to research, to development of both new technical and artistic applications as well as new theoretical models for understanding how film, television and interactive media impact our society.”

In addition to Time Warner, patrons of the cinema school’s endowed chairs include: Electronic Arts, Inc.; Hugh M. Hefner, Patricia Hitchcock O’Connell and the Alfred Hitchcock Foundation; George Lucas; the late Stephen K. Nenno, the Mary Pickford Foundation; Katherine and Frank Price; Steven Spielberg; and Fran and Ray Stark.

“The creation of an endowed position is what brought me to USC from the University of California, San Diego,” said Professor Ellen Seiter, who assumed the Stephen K. Nenno Endowed Chair in Television Studies. “And it represents the high point of my career after 24 years of university life,” she added.

The event’s roster of chair presenters featured leaders from across the entertainment spectrum, including: Paul Lee, president of Electronic Arts; Michael Nowacki, vice president for News and Late Night Sales for CBS Television; Keith Lawrence, president and CEO of the Mary Pickford Institute; Katherine Price and Frank Price, chairman and CEO of Price Entertainment, Inc., who is also a USC Trustee and chairman of the School of Cinema-Television Board of Councilors; and cinematography professor Woody Omens and sound designer Gary Rydstrom on behalf of filmmakers George Lucas and Steven Spielberg. (See box for full listing)

The installation of the chairs marks the latest success in the campaign began last year during the school’s 75th anniversary celebrations to raise the cinema-television endowment.

In addition to supporting academic activity in selected areas, endowed chairs also serve to honor the talent and legacy of individuals who might not be publicly well known, but who nonetheless were major forces behind the creation of our popular culture.

Ken Wannberg has been composing and conducting in Hollywood for over half a century and is renowned for his collaborations with John Williams, which have yielded a cache of theme songs ranging from Star Wars to Saving Private Ryan. Kay Rose, who earned an Academy Award for Best Achievement in Sound Editing in 1984 and worked with a virtual Who’s Who of directors, influenced scores of young USC filmmakers, including George Lucas who sought her advice on his film THX 1138. USC alumnus Conrad Hall ’50 was an Academy Award-winning cinematographer who filmed nearly three dozen movies, among them Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid and American Beauty. Stephen Nenno, who graduated from USC in 1959, rose through the ranks at ABC to become the network’s vice president of program operations.

Holders of the school’s eight new chairs join their colleagues who occupy four previously established seats to form a record-breaking 12 cinema-television endowed positions.

**Endowed Chairs Of The USC School Of Cinema-Television**

**Professor Todd Boyd**
Katherine and Frank Price Endowed Chair for the Study of Race and Popular Culture

* Funded by Katherine and Frank Price
* Presented by Katherine Price and Frank Price, chairman and CEO of Price Entertainment, Inc., USC Trustee, and chair of the School of Cinema-Television Board of Councilors

**Professor Midge Costin**
Kay Rose Endowed Chair in the Art of Sound and Dialogue Editing

* Funded by George Lucas
* Presented by sound designer Gary Rydstrom on behalf of filmmaker George Lucas

**Professor William Bing Gordon**
Electronic Arts Endowed Chair in Interactive Entertainment

* Funded by Electronic Arts, Inc.
* Presented by Paul Lee, president of Electronic Arts

**Professor Kenneth Hall**
Ken Wannberg Endowed Chair in Music Editing

* Funded by George Lucas and Steven Spielberg
* Presented by sound designer Gary Rydstrom on behalf of filmmakers Steven Spielberg and George Lucas

**Professor Judy Irola**
Conrad Hall Endowed Chair in Cinematography and Color Timing

* Funded by George Lucas and Steven Spielberg
* Presented by cinematographer Woody Omens on behalf of filmmakers Steven Spielberg and George Lucas

**Professor Gerald I. Isenberg**
Stephen K. Nenno Endowed Chair in Television Production

* Funded by Michael Nussack, vice president for News and Late Night Sales for CBS Television
* Presented by Katherine Price and Frank Price, chairman and CEO of Price Entertainment, Inc.

**Professor Doe Mayer**
Mary Pickford Endowed Chair

* Funded by the Mary Pickford Foundation
* Presented by Keith Lawrence, president and CEO of the Mary Pickford Institute

**Professor Ellen Seiter**
Stephen K. Nenno Endowed Chair in Television Studies

* Funded by the late Stephen K. Nenno
* Presented by Michael Nussack, vice president for News and Late Night Sales for CBS Television

Previously Endowed Faculty Positions At The School Of Cinema-Television

**Professor Drew Casper**
Alma and Alfred Hitchcock Endowed Chair

* Funded by Patricia Hitchcock O’Connell and the Alfred Hitchcock Foundation
* Dedicated in 1997

**Dean Elizabeth Daley**
Steven J. Ross / Time Warner Endowed Dean’s Chair

* Funded by Time Warner
* Dedicated in 1993

**Professor Richard Jewell**
Hugh M. Hefner Endowed Chair for the Study of American Film

* Funded by Hugh M. Hefner
* Dedicated in 1996

**Professor Lawrence Turman**
Fran and Ray Stark Endowed Chair

* Funded by Ray Stark
* Dedicated in 1998

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Frank Price
Peter Rash
Scott Sessa
Herb Sommell
Scott Stone
Tiger Taylor
John Wells
Paul Junger Witt

Shows on the Air

Desperate Housewives—Bryan Burk ’91, Co-Producer; Andre Nemec, Writer/Producer
Bones—Greg Yaitanes ’92, Producer, Director
Criminal Minds—Jeff Davis, Executive Producer
GREY’S ANATOMY—Shonda Rhimes ’94, Executive Producer
House, M.D.—Bryant Singer ’89, Executive Producer
It’s Me Gerald—John McLaughlin ’79, Writer
Killer Instincts—Carla Kettner ’84, Executive Producern
Lost—Bryan Burk ’91, Executive Producer, Christina M. Kim ’93, Writer; Steven Maeda ’92, Writer/Supervising Producer, Javier Grillo-Marxuach ’93, Writer/Supervising Producer
The Ellen DeGeneres Show—Lisa Allen ’89, Writer
Entourage—Lisa Allen ’89, Writer
Family Guy—Patrick Hogan, Dialogue/ADR Editor
General Hospital—Robert Guza, Jr., ’78, Head Writer; Charles Pratt, Jr. ’78, Head Writer
The George Lopez Show—Robert Borden ’91, Executive Producer
Grey’s Anatomy—Shonda Rhimes ’94, Writer/Executive Producer
House, M.D.—Bryant Singer ’89, Executive Producer
It’s Me Gerald—John McLaughlin ’79, Writer
Killer Instincts—Carla Kettner ’84, Executive Producer
Lost—Bryan Burk ’91, Executive Producer, Christina M. Kim ’93, Writer; Steven Maeda ’92, Writer/Supervising Producer, Javier Grillo-Marxuach ’93, Writer/Supervising Producer
Nip/Tuck—Christopher Baffa ’88, Director of Photography
The O.C.—Josh Schwartz ’99, Writer/Executive Producer
The Office—Paul Feig ’84, Director; Ken Kwapis ’82, Executive Producer
Painkiller Jane—Sanford Bookstaver ’95, Director
Penn & Teller: Bullshit—John McLaughlin ’89, Writer; Staz Picos ’83, Writer/Executive Producer; Mark Wolper ’83, Executive Producer
Prison Break—Sanford Bookstaver ’95, Director, Zack Estrin ’94, Supervising Producer; Guy Ferland ’88, Director; Robert La Bonge ’76, Director of Photography; Neil Mostiz ’85, Executive Producer; Randall Zisk ’81, Director
Rome—John Milius ’67, Executive Producer
Smallville—Greg Beeman ’82, Executive Producer, Director, Al Gough ’94, Writer/Executive Producer; Miles Millar ’94, Writer/Executive Producer; Brian Peterson ’97, Writer/Supervising Producer; Todd Slavin ’87, Writer/Supervising Producer; Kelly Souders ’97, Writer/Supervising Producer
The Sopranos—Gianna Maria Smart ’88, Producer; Matthew Weiner ’94, Co-Executive Producer
Three Wishes—Tony Crell ’98, Director, Pilot Episode
The Unit—Vahan Moosekian ’75, Co-Executive Producer
The West Wing—John M. Wells ’82, Writer/Executive Producer

Literacy Beyond Words

(continued from page 1) vernacular. At the IML, we are exploring how to work with these new resources in ways that take advantage of their unique properties, while at the same time infusing them with the academic rigor and critical analysis that has been the hallmark of the text-based paradigm,” she added.

Founded in 1998 as an experiment with a handful of professor teaching a limited number of courses, the program has since worked with over 50 faculty members and 2,500 students at USC and beyond. Though their disciplines cover a vast range, from medicine to history to archeology to religion to literature, IML participants share the common goal of discovering the tremendous potential media have to convey complex meaning.

“The exciting thing about the IML is the way it promotes efforts to rethink the cultural, expressive and scholarly possibilities of new technologies. We encourage faculty and students to use new digital technologies to explore themselves, the world, and how they fit into it,” said Anne Balsamo, IML director of Academic Programs, and professor of interactive media and gender studies. “I never cease to be amazed at the profound result that stems from that exploration,” she added.

With the understanding that younger people are among the most rapid adaptors of new technologies, the institute has structured its research and education programs to reach the full range of the educational spectrum, from K-12 to post-doctoral.

Its key initiatives include:

Partnering with the USC Rossier School of Education to create an intensive 14-month multimedia track for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree. Graduates enter the profession at all levels, bringing their knowledge to grade schools around the state and the nation.

Creating the Walli Annenberg Initiative, a professional development program for middle school teachers and administrators to integrate multimedia literacy and media arts into a standards-based curriculum.

Organizing annual faculty workshops on the topics of “Transforming Teaching Through Multimedia” and “Transforming Scholarship Through Multimedia.”

The IML has also made substantial inroads in enhancing USC’s undergraduate programs. In 2002, the group initiated the Honors in Multimedia Scholarship project, an innovative four-year course of study for select students from schools around the university who are interested in new forms of scholarship and research.

“The Honors in Multimedia Scholarship program is not a major or a minor,” said Steven Anderson, IML associate director for the undergraduate programs, who is also an assistant professor in the Interactive Media Division, “it is designed to function as an enhancement to traditional disciplines and academic work.”

The honors program combines required and elective courses at the IML with multimedia-enhanced courses throughout USC. In their first year, students develop a conceptual and technical foundation for multimedia scholarship in required and elective introductory courses at the IML. During their sophomore and junior years, students take IML-affiliated courses in the General Education program and in their major or minor areas of study. For their senior year, students enroll in a two-semester “capstone” thesis seminar, where they plan and implement an advanced scholarly multimedia thesis project in consultation with their major advisor and an advisor from the IML.

(continued on next page)
“The intellectual community within the honors program is very diverse,” said Sonia Sesatharaman, a second-year honors student, “and collaboration is key. It is nice to be able to come up with concrete ideas based on four or five different disciplines. In turn I think we’re learning more and learning from each other.”

Based on these successes, Provost Max C. L. Nikias has asked organizers from the IML and the College of Letters, Arts & Sciences to design a program that will extend multimedia instruction into the USC’s General Education program, the core class set for undergraduates across the university.

“The goal of the IML collaboration with the College is to support and enhance the central objectives of the General Education program at USC,” Balsamo said. “By integrating instruction on multimedia authorship within the General Education, core literacies that are the foundation of the program—of writing, critical analysis, and scholarly research—are augmented and enhanced. To do this, IML instructional staff will collaborate with College faculty to create educational materials, train teaching assistants, and develop course assignments that integrate multimedia literacy with core literacy objectives,” she added.

The first of these GE courses will be offered this fall.
What’s it like to be half a world away from the vistas and people of Australia, yet be able to experience the clarity and color of the setting with High Definition video? Along with colleagues in Tokyo, Amsterdam, Australia and other universities in the U.S., a cinema-television team headed by Computer Animation Lab Director Richard Weinberg discovered just that—with amazing results during the Supercomputing 2005 conference (SC05) in Seattle last November.

To conduct the test, Weinberg was stationed in Seattle at the booth of the ResearchChannel, a non-profit consortium dedicated to providing unmediated access to research, while digital systems specialist Eric Furie and creative technology manager Greg Vannoy streamed high-definition video from the Visual Effects Studio at the school’s Robert Zemeckis Center in Los Angeles. Thanks to a high-speed connection, the studio appeared live at the conference, as well as at the other participating sites around the globe, while real-time HD video was received back at USC from the other partners.

*Visiting Associate Professor Michael Toshiyuki Uno strikes a pose while digital systems specialist Eric Furie and creative technology manager Greg Vannoy streamed high-definition video from the Visual Effects Studio at the Zemeckis Center in Los Angeles.*

Weinberg and team used a high-definition Sony HDW-F900 camera and HP workstations to capture and transmit the video to SC05. They also went one step further by compositing the live action in front of the blue screen with computer generated HD background images using the HD Ultimatte system and NVIDIA HD graphics in the Visual Effects Studio. The result was a live HD picture of people at the school looking as if they were physically located outside the Washington State Convention and Trade Center.

“This is an incredible development for both HD production and distant collaboration,” said Weinberg. “Instead of everyone being in the same place, this technology can enable a team positioned around the world to collaboratively produce an HD television program or movie with full resolution, in real time,” he said. “For post-production, people could be at their base location playing their HD content and transmitting it simultaneously to distant colleagues instead of getting onto a plane with all their digital media and flying to an editing session.”

As the premier international conference on high-performance computing, networking and storage, SC05 provided a unique opportunity for the school to show off its expertise in doing worldwide collaboration in HD format. Through their test, the group demonstrated how an HD quality image can go over a specially configured network in real time with less than one second of delay. “What we see is what they see,” said Furie. “I’d have to say this is beyond cutting edge, it’s bleeding edge.”

With its extraordinary resolution and speed, the network technologies that the school is exploring also have significant ramifications for distribution. With the right network connections, servers and projectors in place, it is possible to press the play button and have a digital film run simultaneously at venues around the world. The Interactive Media Division is also interested in using high speed international networks to develop real-time interactive games that can be played between Los Angeles and Tokyo.

“This is just one route toward the digital cinema of the future,” added Furie. “It’s up to anyone’s imagination to find a use for it.”

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**Resolution Revolution**

**Recent Releases**

**Cheaper by the Dozen 2** — Shawn Levy ’94, Producer  
**The Chumscrubber** — Ari Posin ’93, Director  
**The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe** — Chuck Michael ’87, Sound Editor; F. Hudson Miller ’84, Sound Editor  
**Cry Wolf** — Beau Bauman ’89, Producer/Writer; Jeffrey Wadlow ’91, Director  
**Curious George** — David Kirschner, Producer; Ken Kaufman, Writer; Kathy Kirkpatrick ’88, Writer  
**Domino** — Richard Kelly ’97, Writer  
**The Exorcism of Emily Rose** — Jeff Betancourt ’96, Editor; Scott Derrickson ’95, Director; Paul Harris Boardman, Writer  
**The Family Stone** — Jeffrey Ford ’91, Editor  
**Flightplan** — Brian Grazer ’74, Producer  
**The Fog** — John Carpenter ’71, Producer; David Foster ’53, Producer; Nathan Hope ’95, Director of Photography  
**Fun Little Movies** — Frank Chindamo, President/Chief Creative Officer  
**Fun With Dick and Jane** — Judd Apatow ’87, Writer; Brian Grazer ’74, Producer  
**Get Rich or Die Tryin’** — Writer  
**Good Night, and Good Luck** — Producer  
**Get Rich or Die Tryin’** — Writer  
**Good Little Movies** — Frank Chindamo, President/Chief Creative Officer  
**Just Like Heaven** — Photography  
**The King of Queens** — sound editor  
**Kids in America** — Josh Stolberg ’96, Director  
**Last Holiday** — Robert Zemeckis ’73, Producer  
**Prime** — Suzanne Todd ’86 & Jennifer Todd ’87, Producers  
**The Pink Panther** — Shawn Levy ’94, Director  
**The Prize Winner of Defiance Ohio** — Robert Zemeckis ’73, Producer  
**Rent** — Kevin McCollum ’89, Executive Producer; Stephen Chbosky ’82, Writer  
**Sea of Dreams (Mar de Sueños)** — Jose “Pepe” Bojorquez ’02, Writer-Producer-Director; David Howard, Writer; Nicholas Todtten ’02, Producer; Christopher Chomyn, Director of Photography  
**The Squid and the Whale** — Robert Yeoman ’79, Director  
**Syriana** — Robert Elowit  ’75, Director of Photography  
**Tim Burton’s Corpse Bride** — Michael Vukadinovic ’04, Writer  
**Tristan & Isolde** — Kevin Reynolds ’81, Director  
**Two for the Money** — Mark P. Saez  ’82, Sound Editor  
**Walk the Line** — Doug Ellin ’79, Sound  
**The Weather Man** — Todd Black ’82, Producer; Lee Oliff, Sound  
**The White Countess** — James Ivory ’57, Director  
**Yours, Mine & Ours** — Bruce Green, Editor  
**Zathura** — Stephen Hunter Flick, Sound  

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**What’s New in Digital Production**

**Visiting Associate Professor Michael Toshiyuki Uno strikes a pose while digital systems specialist Eric Furie and creative technology manager Greg Vannoy streamed high-definition video from the Visual Effects Studio at the Zemeckis Center in Los Angeles.**
Danish On The Sides

Since its creation over three-quarters of a century ago, the cinema program has had a major international impact, drawing scores of students each semester from around the world to Los Angeles to perfect their storytelling abilities.

“All of us did some traveling in Europe before we were teachers,” said Associate Professor Tom Abrams, who, along with Associate Professor David Howard and senior lecturers Ted Braun and David Weber, ventures to Europe each year to tutor at the program.

“So it’s exciting for all of us to go back and meet people from other cultures and even more so to be working on creative projects with those people,” Abrams added.

Those creative projects include work from screenwriters generally chosen by the film development boards of the nations that support North by Northwest including Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Writers with all levels of experience attend the program, from those who have completed film school to those who are working professionally and looking to expand their horizons.

The workshops take projects from the concept to the treatment stages and see them through to the first draft. Abrams, Braun, Howard and Weber—whose credits include features and documentaries, as well as productions for TNT, A&E, The Discovery Channel, PBS and CBS—travel to Copenhagen three times a year for five days each visit.

“What’s great about the experience is the intensity of the connection that you have with each person and how they pull from their own culture and experience,” said Howard, who was instrumental in helping develop North by Northwest with Annette Funch Thomassen of the Danish Film Institute. “Each year’s participants always bring something different.”

One of North by Northwest’s fundamental advantages—just like the School of Cinema-Television’s writing division—is the intimate size of its workshops, which usually hold fewer than 10 participants. Another time-tested approach that the team has brought from their USC experience is the emphasis on working directly with their writers as opposed to simply lecturing. “All the scripts have their special qualities. You learn what’s universal as well as what’s unique to these countries,” said Weber. “Our objective is to guide the discussion so writers from different cultures can learn from each other.”

And regardless of whether they are teaching in the city of the angels or 5,500 miles away in the city with the mermaid by the sea, the foursome readily agree their mission boils down to the same theme: Help writers discover who they are and how to channel their unique voice into a story to which audiences can relate.

“That is the really genuinely exciting part,” Braun said. “Finding where the story is coming from within the writer. Getting them to understand that and bring that fully to light.”

For more information on North by Northwest log on to www.n-b-n.dk

A Most Atypical Professor

Division of Critical Studies Professor David James, one of the leading scholars of independent cinema in the country, will receive the highest honor the university confers upon its faculty members when he is given the USC Associates Award for Creativity in Research this spring.

The award, which has been granted to USC faculty since 1960, serves to recognize “distinguished intellectual and artistic achievement that has resulted in a significant impact on a discipline at the interface of disciplines, or in the creation of viable new areas of scholarly activity,” according to the group’s Webpage.

“David is not only a brilliant, prolific and internationally-renowned scholar, but also a gifted teacher and an engaged citizen of the world,” said Tara McPherson, chair of the Division of Critical Studies. “He is passionately committed to the belief that art and ideas can change society and make it a more just and enriching place,” she added.

McPherson said that James’ distinguished career, international reputation and excellent teaching all merit this recognition. “David embodies what the USC Associates call ‘the heart of a university and the essential element of our future greatness,’” McPherson said.

James has achieved particular renown as an authority in Asian cinema and avant-garde cinema. He has expanded and enriched the cultural scene in Los Angeles, curated countless film programs, worked on museum exhibitions, produced his own film work and published extensively in the arts and popular press, including his latest book The Most Typical Avant-Garde: History and Geography of Minor Cinemas in Los Angeles, which came out just last year. (See “In Print and Online,” page 2)

The manuscript, which details nearly 100 years of Southern California filmmaking, excavates the long and important history of non-studio filmmaking in the city of Angels. “The history of independent filmmaking here was very, very substantial and in fact more important than in any other city in the country,” James said.

By examining Latino, Asian-American, gay and African-American film production in the region, James also brings to light the varied ways in which cinema functions as a political and social force in the world.

James received the award at the USC Academic Honors Convocation on March 30.

Remembering Jae Carmichael

The USC cinema-television community was deeply saddened to learn of Jae Carmichael’s passing on November 5, 2005. Carmichael received her doctorate in cinematography and art history at the school, where she taught classes in film and television for many years. She was a remarkable artist, professional, and human being who represented all that is best about the entertainment industry.

With her work among the permanent collections of the Oakland Museum of California, the Long Beach Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and other institutions, Carmichael’s life will remain an inspiration to her many students, friends and admirers at the school.

Professor David James will receive the prestigious USC Associates Award for Creativity in Research this spring.
1950-1969

John Bailey ’68 was the cameraman for The S...
Alaska Julie Singer, ’98 was a story producer for The Biggest Loser Episode 5, and works on Beauty and the Geek. Lisa Singer ’99 was a story producer for The Biggest Loser Episode 10 and the finale. Juliet Snowden ’95 has written the script for the indie horror movie The Waiting. Stephen Sommers ’93 is a writer for Lakeshore Entertainment’s Banking Orders. He will also write and direct Where Worlds Collide. Josh Stulberg ’96 will be writing the Warner Bros. comedy pitch Man-Witch. He also wrote the pitch Extra Extra to be produced by Robert Kosberg. Scott Strauss ’93 has been named senior vice president of production at Screen Gems. He was most recently a partner at Outlaw Productions. Stephen Susco ’99 is writing the screen-play for the movie Crawlpace, which is an adaptation of Herbert Lieberman’s novel. Rawson Marshall Thurber ’99 is directing the upcoming Eddie Murphy comedy Norbit, which is written and directed by Magnum PI. and his own high concept comedy idea, partnering with Ben Stiller and Stuart Cornfeld of Red Hour Films. Greg Yaitanes ’02 is directing the Fox Drama pilot Southern Comfort.

2000-Present

Eric Badros ’04 received a Gold Award at the ADDY Awards for the commercial he directed as part of his thesis. Kevin Burke co-wrote the movie Beneath along with director Dagen Merrill ’02. Jose ‘Pepe’ Bojorquez ’02 won the prestigious XXXVI Diosa De Plata (Goddess of Silver) Award from the Mexican Film Press and Critics (PECIME) in the category of OPERA PRIMA for his directorial debut in Sea Of Dreams. Forest Erickson ’04 received a Gold and two Silver Awards for three commercials he directed as part of his thesis. Frank E. Flowers ’01 will helm a remake of Beto Brant’s Brazilian thriller The Trepassers. Shuhei Fujita ’02 made the feature length film Quiet Summer, which will be screened at the Philadelphia Film Festival. Ben Haber ’00 has been promoted as senior development executive for Broken Road Productions. Azaad Jafarian ’01 wrote the screenplay for Lady Liberty, chosen as one of the seven winners at the Duke City Shootout film festival. Mark Landry ’04 got his film Autonomous licensed by the IFC. Jason Lust ’00 was named senior vice president of the Jim Henson Company. Doug McCord ’01 had a feature screenplay selected as a top ten finalist in the Cinequest screenplay competition. Dagen Merrill ’02 is directing and co-writing Beneath for MTV. Carolyn Miller is writing & directing the independent film Still Waters, produced by Perfect Weekend Productions. Katina Parker joined GLAAD as the new media manager for communities of African descent. Christopher Rowley ’02 is directing Bonniverse, produced by SenArt Films and John Kiker ’03.

Jarrett Schaef er ’01 wrote, and is now directing Chapter 27, a drama about John Lennon’s assassin Mark David Chapman. It stars Jared Leto and Lindsay Lohan, and marks Schaef er’s directorial debut. Veronica Shamo-Garcia received the DGA Students Award for her film De Las Calles. Addison Teague was part of the editing crew for War of The Worlds. Kuo Liang-Yin ’02 produced the feature-length film Quiet Summer.

Who’s On First?

I

t must be spring when the days are longer, the weather is warmer and the spotlight is turned on cinema-television students during the school’s First Look Film Festival and First Pitch writing showcase.

This year’s First Look Film Festival screenings will take place over four nights at the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Theatre Complex in Los Angeles from April 18-21, with the last evening devoted exclusively to animation projects. Shows begin at 7:30 each evening, with additional screenings on Saturday, April 22 at the Norris Theatre Complex on the USC University Park Campus at 11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 4:15 p.m.

Presented twice yearly in the spring and fall, First Look is a comprehensive two-program festival featuring short films produced by students in class workshops or as independent projects. Organized by the Office of Student-Industry Relations, the festival has long been popular with entertainment industry professionals, including studio executives, agents and managers, who view it as an opportunity to assess the work of the next generation of USC filmmakers and animators. The festival is free to the public, however reservations are necessary for the DGA screenings.

For First Look screening information and daily reservations please call 213.740.1153 or visit http://cinema.usc.edu/resources/resources-festivals.cfm for a complete schedule and list of films.

First Pitch, slated for May 1, will bring approximately 50 graduate and undergraduate scribes from the Division of Writing for Screen & Television together with representatives from agencies such as CAA, William Morris, ICM, UTA and Endeavor, along with management firms and production companies. The event, which is by invitation only, will take place at the Four Seasons in Beverly Hills, beginning at 7 p.m.

For First Pitch information, contact the Division of Writing for Screen & Television 213.740.3303, or visit the event Website: http://cinema-tv.usc.edu/uscfirstpitch.

Arts & Sciences

Four students from divisions across the School of Cinema-Television have each won the acclaimed 2005 Alfred P. Sloan Foundation scholarship for work that portrays science and scientists in a more realistic and less stereotypical manner.

The winners, announced last November, were writers Royal McGraw (a recipient of the inaugural Josh Schwartz Scholarship, see “Fellowship Of The Pen,” page 15) for The Voyage of the Beagle and Michael Tuivera for Hand Built Country; production major Adam Kargman for Astrocities; and animation student Pragya Tomar for SAAR. Each received $15,000 in recognition of their effort.

The 2005 competition marked the ninth year the school has partnered with the Sloan Foundation to grant the awards. In addition to how they portray science, the scholarship committee also looks for extraordinary entertainment and commercial appeal in the productions.

“The Alfred P. Sloan program has been one of the most valuable projects at the School of Cinema-Television,” said Dean Elizabeth M. Daley. She congratulated the recipients and went on to say “this exceptional program will continue to be one of the major key initiatives for the school over the next several years.”

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Great Moments

1. The Cloud celebration as the student-designed video game wins “Best Student Philosophy” Award during the 2006 Sundance Guerilla Gamemaker competition.

2. French director Bertrand Tavernier speaks with a 466 student after the screening of his film Holy Lola.

3. Stanley Gold, chair of the USC Board of Trustees (left), with Dean Elizabeth M. Daley and USC Executive Vice President Barry Glassner at the endowed chair event.

4. From left to right, Ray Stark’s granddaughter Allison, his daughter Wendy Stark, Dean Elizabeth M. Daley, Associate Dean Michael Renov and his wife Cathy Finalme at the Stark 25th Anniversary event.

5. Writer John August ’94 and Professor Leonard Maltin hold an original puppet from The Corpse Bride.

6. Jack Valenti, former president of the Motion Picture Association of America, speaks to students about the role of the ratings system in the film industry.

7. Actor Timothy Olyphant (on the right) with Professor Howard Rosenberg after Olyphant visited 494: Television Symposium to discuss his work on the acclaimed series Deadwood.

8. A 466 student and writer/director Mike Mills look at the Website for his new film, Thumbsucker.

9. Katherine Price (left) and Frank Price (right) with Professor Todd Boyd, the first person to hold the Katherine and Frank Price Endowed Chair for the Study of Race and Popular Culture.

10. Oscar-nominated writer/producer and USC Alumnus Grant Heslov ’86 discusses his recent film, Good Night, and Good Luck, with a 466 student.

11. Greg Yaitanes ’92, discusses his work on Lost, Nip/Tuck and Bones at the Zaki Gordon Speaker Series.
A Real Cloud Pleaser

Imagine a videogame where no shots are fired, no one dies, no one competes for superiority, and stress is nonexistent. Now, think about the last time you sat in a field of grass, simply staring at the sky and imagining the shapes the clouds made as they merged and moved across the big blue. These two peaceful themes are at the heart of Cloud, a new videogame that graduate students in the Division of Interactive Media are building and which has become a sensation both online and in the media.

The lead character in the student-designed interactive game Cloud defies gravity—and conventional design concepts—to lead the player on a journey toward inner peace and harmony.

Third-year M.F.A. student and Cloud lead designer Jenova Chen recently demonstrated the game in the Electronic Arts Game Innovation Lab at the Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts.

As he activates Cloud, the opening scenes feature artwork created by a student team, accompanied by the slow, soothing melodic music that they wrote and recorded for the game. Surrounded by this mellow spa-like ambiance, users become an extension of a child asleep in a hospital bed. With one click of the computer mouse, the sky becomes a canvas and the clouds form a pen as the user plays the role of the child in his dreams. There is an instant sense of flying free through the skies, potentially becoming one with the bright white clouds, capturing them and bringing light and life to the islands and ground below.

Time limits are nonexistent in Cloud, a game without boundaries and void of the typical outside trappings of current commercial counterparts such as skill levels, body counts and split-second reflex testing. The end goal is simple: become one with the boy and help him realize his dream.

Switching viewing modes, Chen turns the boy on the screen into a bright white dot that merges with a cloud, then draws it across the crystal blue sky to encounter its ominous gray counterpart. When the two fuse, the gray becomes white and the marriage produces a soothing rain shower to the ground below.

"The point is not to destroy all the dark clouds," Chen explained, "because in the end, they're not really bad." He clicks through the game and begins to collect cloud after cloud, making the vapor stack taller and larger. The child, whom he has reactivated on the screen, pulls the column through the sky. When enough clouds accumulate, the child forms them into an enormous cloud lollipop.

"We're interested in making games for people who might want to play games, but they just don't know it yet," Assistant Professor and Lab Co-Director Tracy Fullerton said.

Chen agreed, stopping his cloud formation to chime in. "There's no outside influence as is typical of the current video games. We didn't want to put pressure on the player. I wanted to recapture that feeling of just looking up at the sky and wondering what shapes you can create." He goes back to his lollipop.

"Everyone's done that."

Most of the ideas for Cloud came from Chen, who began collaborative work with the other members of the Cloud team—John DeWreeze, Vincent Diamante, Erin Dinnebart, Aaron Meyers, Erik Nelson, Kellee Santiago, and Glenn Song—in January of 2005. After making substantial progress on the game that semester, work stopped for the summer because most of the team was committed to summer internships at Electronic Arts. They returned last fall to restart the project, which was a true labor of love since it fell outside the full load of the graduate classes they were all taking.

During that semester, research began in earnest on modeling the clouds and shaping them so that they floated effortlessly on the screen. It was no easy task since in the history of games, there are few, if any, that simulate clouds.

As part of the development process, the group put a free downloadable beta version on its server. In late November, after Cloud received a small mention on a blog for the Sydney, Australia Morning Herald, the game literally became an overnight sensation. Based on a blogger's comment that Cloud is "the only relaxing game I can ever recall playing" more than 100,000 users worldwide attempted to download the free game and overwhelmed the server at the Division of Interactive Media. "We were pretty much caught off guard with the response," Fullerton said.

That response prompted two immediate results. Cloud got a significant server upgrade courtesy of Electronic Arts and reporters started calling from around the globe.

In December, CBS News Sunday Morning featured the game in a story segment on the future of video games and Spike TV's Game Head, a half-hour weekly program dedicated to everything that is happening in the world of video games, featured the dreamy experience along with a day in the life of a USC Interactive Media student. That coverage joined with features in numerous industry magazines, as well as being named "Internet Download Game of the Month" from the UK magazine Edge (issue number 156). Cloud spurred discussions worldwide on game blogs and it won the "Best Student Philosophy" Award this January during the 2006 Slamdance Guerilla Gamemaker Competition in Park City, Utah. (See Box) It has also been accepted into the Independent Game Festival, which was held at the Game Developers Conference in March.

"I do think there can be a commercial game like this," Fullerton said when asked where the game goes from here. "The question is what can games be like in the future, and I hope that Cloud inspires people and the industry to look at different ways we can entertain."

In the same fashion real clouds merge and become greater, Cloud, the game could well be indicative of how the winds of change are blowing through the electronic environment.

Cloud is available for PC download at www.thatcloudgame.com

The Reel Thing

This year, three of the ten finalist films for the Coca-Cola Refreshing Filmmaker’s Award belonged to production division graduate teams—an incredible accomplishment when you consider that students from 12 film schools were eligible to submit entries.

Each team received a production grant from Coca-Cola that allowed them to turn their scripts—which were centered on the movies, the movie-going experience or the movie making process—into 50-second pre-feature films. Representing the school were:

• Veronica Shamo-Garcia and Sabi Lofgren, Kidtopia
• Stephen Srpak-Fleet and Nicole Philipps, Six Degrees of Coca-Cola
• Sebastian Davis and Mike Swingler, Theater 13

To view each of the completed spots, visit the 2006 Coca-Cola Refreshing Filmmaker’s Awards at www.ccrfa.com/ccrfa.
me taught me something and I was being challenged in a way that I hadn’t been challenged before.”

Without a doubt, being a part of Desperate Housewives is one of the best times of all for four alumni. “It’s gratifying to be involved with something that’s so well regarded,” Black continued. “We’re very proud of it. As a writer, you still do what you’ve done before and that’s write and rewrite and put out a great show.”

While there is more pressure working on a hit, no matter who in the ratings a show lands, Sperzal added that the goal is the same. “We strive to do something great right out of the gate and deliver something that’s shocking and fiercely entertaining.”

“A Whale Of A Score

Little did Chris Ward LAS ’91 know that his fascination and love for music would take him from the mixing stages at USC to the multimedia stages of one of the heaviest names in the entertainment business. As lead composer of the music created exclusively for Believe, the new SeaWorld production starring Shamu, Ward is immersed in the sounds and rhythms of the four-con killer whale’s latest stadium attraction.

Opening this spring at SeaWorld in San Antonio, Orlando and San Diego, the new Shamu show is Ward’s latest work in a music career that to date spans 25 features and 90 episodes of television. Among his filmography credits are music arranger (uncredited) for Walk The Line; assistant to Oscar-winning composer Hans Zimmer for both the stage and screen versions of The Lion King; and composer for the animated television show, Jackie Chan Adventures.

“Scoring the new Shamu show is definitely one of my most challenging projects,” Ward explained recently. “I usually see the footage first and then react musically. With Believe, each show is visually built around my music.”

Visualizing the sounds of music is nothing new to Ward, who comes from a family of passionate music people. Before he found himself scoring the student film of his next-door neighbor at USC, Ward was already an accomplished clarinetist who played with the National Symphony Orchestra, the Washington Conservatory for Music and Wynton Marsalis. Soon after arriving at USC, Ward switched his business major to music and then, realizing the change would push back his graduation date, took on additional coursework to earn a degree in English and American Literature.

Thinking back, Ward says his cross-disciplinary education was instrumental to his success. “It was the first time that I ever went from one class to the next and realized what I learned in one applied to the other. It’s a great lesson. I love the school and I’m very proud of my experience there. One thing I’ll never forget,” he laughed, “is running in the rain to the mixing stages with my keyboard.”

Now, faced with a 46-minute show of Shamu proportions, Ward is ready to put the finishing touches on his latest challenge. The biggest change this time, however, is that someone else is bound to get wet.

The Director’s Take

While watching Star Wars in 1977, one question ran through the mind of Sanford Bookstaver ’95: “How’d they do that?” Four years later, at the ripe old age of eight, Bookstaver helped his third-grade class make a 16mm movie starring a claymation caveman. From the moment the clayman’s malted came crashing down, Bookstaver was hooked on filmmaking. “I thought it was the coolest thing ever and I literally wanted to do that for my whole life,” he laughed.

That unnamed film has since been topped on his résumé with directing credits from a slew of hit television shows including Dawson’s Creek (“Highway to Hell,” 1998), The Others (“$4.95 A Minute,” 2000), The O.C. (“The Escape,” “The Best Chrismukkah Ever” and “The Telenovela” 2003) and the season finale of Prison Break (“End of the Tunnel,” 2005).

Bookstaver, who majored in critical studies, credits his cinema-television education with a key role in his success as a director. Looking back on his time as an undergrad, he recalled one of his favorite classes that examined films by breaking them down to learn about the decisions behind the shots. “It was so important to understand the filmmaking process,” he said, lauding critical studies and its significance to anyone interested in entering the business. “Studying cinema history was one of the best things I did at USC.”

Although achieving his childhood directing dream took a few years of paying his dues after graduation, Bookstaver quickly discovered that no matter what position he held in the industry, USC alumni were not far behind. “I felt very

Illustrious Alumni

Desperate Times Call For The Talents Of USC Alumni

On Wisteria Lane, nothing is what it seems and learning all there is to know about the neighbors can be a darkly comedic, though sometimes deadly experience. Not so desperate, and a lot less secretive are four of the six School of Cinema-Television alumni who create the world of the seemingly perfect American suburb on ABC’s Desperate Housewives.

Alumni Charlie Skouras, Chris Black, Tom Sperzal and Brian Alexander are all a pivotal part of the ABC hit Desperate Housewives. “I tell you, television is hard work,” offered Producer/Production Manager Charlie Skouras ‘77, who came to the small screen with a big-screen background including working on The Abyss, Snow Falling on Cedars and Android. “When you have something in common like USC, it doesn’t make the work any easier, but the camaraderie you share cuts through a lot of layers.”

His colleagues on the show, Executive Producer and Writer Tom Sperzal ‘85, Co-Executive Producer and Writer Chris Black ‘84, and Script Coordinator Brian Alexander ’99 couldn’t agree more.

“USC allowed me to make what could possibly have been some huge career-ending mistakes, only I got to do them in film school,” explained Alexander. Like his Desperate Housewives teammates, Alexander believes in the need to do anything. “You have to see the opportunity even in the worst of times.”

“It’s like birth by fire,” laughed Skouras. “But word of mouth does help you get your next job.”

Sperzal agreed, but also recalled a time when television was not the most sought-after medium of employment choice and recommended that men and women aspiring to enter entertainment today do so with an open mind. “If you go into your career with strict parameters of what you will or will not do it’s not going to work,” said Sperzal, whose lengthy list of producing and writing credits includes Ed, The District and Weeds Science.

“USC was an intellectually stimulating environment,” chimed in Black, whose writing and producing credits include such shows as Enterprise, Xena Warrior Princess, Weeds Science (with Sperzal) and Cleopatra 2525. “Because it was very multi-disciplinary, you got to see it all. You’re opened up to other disciplines, you got to see it all. You’re opened up to other people from utterly different sensibilities. Everyone around the table brought a lot to the process.”

“Consulting and Executive Producer Charlie Pann, Jr., ‘78 and Associate Producer John Blake were unable to join us for this story.

A Whale Of A Score

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Having enjoyed a career sparked by events in a galaxy far, far away, Bookstaver had his own words of wisdom for those aspiring to thrive in the cinema-television world. “Utilize all the resources at your disposal. The alumni, the professors, and the facilities at USC are like none you’ll find at any other film school.”

The Man With The Movie Camera

In 1929, Dziga Vertov chronicled a day in the life of the Soviet Union with his classic The Man With The Movie Camera. For the past 30 years, Robert LaBonge ’76 has literally lived life as the man behind the movie and television camera, rising from an assistant’s post to director of photography and racking up a project roster that features such blockbusters as Return of the Jedi and The X-Files.

Currently serving as DP for the new Fox hit Prison Break—winner of the 2005 People’s Choice Award for Favorite New TV Drama—LaBonge felt from day one that his career would put him behind the camera. “I always had a love for still photography,” he said. “While everyone I went to school with wanted to be the director and the writer, I knew right away that I wanted to be the cameraman.”

At the time of LaBonge’s graduation from the production program, Hollywood was brimming with opportunities. “I initially dived right into the midst of it,” he recalled. “My first job was as a camera assistant, and from there I was lucky enough to get work that just kept snowballing.”

In addition to Star Wars: Episode VI—Return of the Jedi and The X-Files, LaBonge’s résumé includes Galaxy Quest, The Green Mile, Contact, American Wedding, and a long list of others, all of which indicate the snowball shows no signs of melting. “The challenging thing this time around,” he laughed, “is prisons weren’t built for easy lighting and cameratry.”

With Prison Break filming in and around a blustery and cold Chicago this winter, the conversation with LaBonge naturally turned to fond memories of his home in sunny SoCal and SC. “I had a great time at the school,” LaBonge said. “I’d like to come back and r etake a history of film class. I think it’s important to learn everything you can about the industry’s past.”

And what else would he impart to current students as they work on building their own résumés? “Opportunity is out there. With every move you make the more of an expert you become, so it’s important to just get your foot in the door. It’s about being tenacious and turning every opportunity you have into a success.”

Sage Council

(continued from page 11)

The initiative will create a vehicle for alumni to learn about the latest news and developments at the school and also enable them to take an ownership stake in the institution and help shape the path it will take.

“This is another demonstration of the close relationship between the school and its alumni,” Dean Elizabeth M. Daley said. “I can’t think of a better way to help guide the school’s future than to have this group share their wisdom and experience with us and our students.”

“So many of Hollywood’s best business and creative leaders got their start at USC’s School of Cinema-Television. We owe a large part of our success to what we learned in those classrooms,” said writer/producer Andrew Marlowe ’92, who chairs the council. “Now, my colleagues and I want to bring our experience and creative energy back to the school, to find new and innovative ways to serve and strengthen USC’s already remarkable legacy.”

Writer/producer/director Jay Roach ’86 agreed, and noted that council members recognize the importance of not only reaching out to students, but to other alumni, especially those with below-the-line expertise. “This field is full of people with invaluable skills and insight,” he said. “The council presents a unique chance to let those who went through the USC experience become involved with the school and bring their knowledge ‘back home.’”

From mentoring and internships to fundraising and alumni recognition, the council agenda is full of possibilities. Already, the group has lent its input to two key projects: the creation of an online job board and a career seminar series. The job board is expected to be deployed later this year, and the seminar series will take place over the coming year as well, with a focus both on current students and recent graduates.

“This council is a great opportunity,” said Polly Cohen ’95, executive vice president of Theatrical Production at Warner Bros. Pictures. “It will give me the chance to explore and articulate some new models for internships, which played a vital role in launching my career. With my partners on the council, I hope to find novel ways of expanding these initiatives for students and recent grads.”

Building on the foundation of mentorship programs that already exist throughout the school is another significant area of involvement for the group, said Bob Osher ’81, who serves as the chief operating officer at the Columbia Pictures Motion Picture Group. “Such one-on-one engagements are among the most immediate ways we have to guide the futures of the men and women entering entertainment,” said Osher. “And from my perspective, I think mentorships are equally valuable to those of us who are already out here, by exposing us to the enthusiasm, energy and fresh ideas of these students.”

Producer Scott Stone ’79 underscored how the council can work to shine the spotlight on the significance of networking. “We all know that in this business effective networking is an essential part of your career. I’d like to help instill the thought in recent alumni and future graduates that they should leave school focused on their relationships and not on becoming the next big director overnight,” he said.

USC School of Cinema-Television Alumni Development Council (as of 3/06)

JOHN AUGUST ’94—Writer/producer (Big Fish, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Charlie’s Angels)
POLLY COHEN ’95—Executive Vice President, Theatrical Production, Warner Bros. Pictures
ROBERT GREENBLATT ’87—President, Entertainment, Showtime/Executive Producers (Six Feet Under)
RAMSES ISHAK ’92 (Annenberg School)—Agent, William Morris Agency
JAMES ISHI ’76—Entertainment Consultant
ARON KAPLAN ’90 (Marshall School)—Agent, William Morris Agency
MICHAEL LEHMANN ’85—Director (Heathers, The Comeback, The Larry Sanders Show)
MICHELLE MANNING ’81—Producer, MM Productions
ANDREW MARLOWE ’92—Writer/Producers (Air Force One, Hollow Man, End of Days, Manhunt)
DEREK MCLAY ’79 (Marshall School/Cinema)—Marketing/Distribution Analyst, IAG Research
ROBERT Osher ’81—Chief Operating Officer, Columbia Pictures Motion Picture Group
SANTIAGO PEZZO ’86—Chief Executive Officer, The Arenas Group
SOCHONI RAYHES ‘94—Creator/Writer/Executive Producer (Grey’s Anatomy)
JAY RECHTER ’86—Writer/Producer/Director (Meet The Parents series, Austin Powers series)
BRUCE ROSENBLUM ’79 (Marshall School)—President, Warner Bros. Television Group
GARY RYDSTROM ’81—Sound Editor (Saving Private Ryan, Titanic, Jurassic Park) / Director, Pixar Animation Studios
JOSH SCHWARTZ ’99—Creator/Writer/Executive Producer (The O.C.)
PETER SEGAL ’84 (LAS)—Director (The Longest Yard, 50 First Dates, Anger Management)
STACEY SHER ’85—Producer (Eric Broussard, Out of Sight, World Trade Center)
JASON SHULMAN ’86—Producer (Darkness Falls, Little Black Book, The Messenger)
JOHN SINGLETON ’90—Writer/Producer/Director (Boys N The Hood, Hustle & Flava, Four Brothers)
SCOTT STONE ’79—Producer (The Man Show, The Male, The Ride: Seven Days to End AIDS)
knowing something’s impossible, but wanting to believe it nonetheless is one of the most visceral forces behind the power of cinema. And long before the director ever yells “action” it’s the role of the production artist to conjure up and carry out the cinematic delights of hand behind that force.

“We create that world of impossibility,” said Rick Carter, one of Hollywood’s pre- eminent production designers, who’s helped shape the look of everything from Robert Zemeckis’ Back to the Future II and III to Steven Spielberg’s Munich.

“We’re responsible for all the behind-the-scenes work that goes into making what you see on screen possible,” added Carter, who recently donated a major archive of production records to the School of Cinema-Television that will provide scholars and artists for years to come with a unique source of insight and inspiration.

Known as the “Rick Carter Collection,” the trove includes hundreds of photographs, set illustrations, scripts, concept set designs and other memorabilia that shed light on how the magic is made. “When anyone looks at the collection—from the notes, to the photographs, to the storyboards—they’ll get a glimpse of what went on to make these movies possible,” Carter said.

Archivists in the cinema-television library are currently cataloguing and preparing the collection for a major installation to take place this fall in the David L. Wolper Center.

“Mission: Impossibility”

Professor Emeritus Sherwood “Woody” Omens, ASC, received one of the entertainment industry’s highest accolades in February when the American Society of Cinematographers conferred its Presidents Award upon him.

Reserved for individuals who have made exceptional contributions to advancing the art and craft of filmmaking, the honor was presented to Omens at the Annual ASC Outstanding Achievement Awards ceremony at the Century Plaza Hotel on February 26.

Omens, who received a master’s in 1965 from the program, said his inspiration for doing great work stems from his love of working with good directors and those truly trying to communicate something meaningful to the audience.

“To excel at cinematography, you have to learn to do what Conrad Hall was so great at: process all that input in your mental computer and translate it visually,” Omens said. “When it’s done right, it’s magic.”

Super Script

For the second year in a row, a USC screenwriting team has won the prestigious Don and Gee Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Fire in a Coal Mine, by the screenwriting team of Ron Moskowitz, who graduated from the production program in 2003, and Seth Resnik, a current Peter Stark Program student, was among five finalists that each won a $30,000 fellowship. The political thriller about a small-town American cop sent by the UN to retrain local police in war-shattered Bosnia was one of 5,879 entries in the competition.

Moskowitz and Resnik accepted the prize at a gala dinner hosted by the academy on November 10, where thanks went out to writing division Senior Lecturer Ted Braun, as well as Associate Professor Norm Hollyn and Professor Jeremy Kagan of the production division.

The Nicholl Fellowship was established in 1986 by Gee Nicholl, the widow of British TV writer Don Nicholl who went out to writing division Senior Lecturer Ted Braun, as well as Associate Professor Norm Hollyn and Professor Jeremy Kagan of the production division.

The Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting is awarded annually to a writer who is a citizen of the United States or Canada, and who has not sold or optioned a feature screenplay. The winner receives a $30,000 prize and the opportunity to sell the screenplay option to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which will then produce the screenplay as a feature film.

Great Omens

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Reserved for individuals who have made exceptional contributions to advancing the art and craft of filmmaking, the honor was presented to Omens at the Annual ASC Outstanding Achievement Awards ceremony at the Century Plaza Hotel on February 26.

Omens, who received a master’s in 1965 from the program, said his inspiration for doing great work stems from his love of working with good directors and those truly trying to communicate something meaningful to the audience.

“To excel at cinematography, you have to learn to do what Conrad Hall was so great at: process all that input in your mental computer and translate it visually,” Omens said. “When it’s done right, it’s magic.”

Isenberg Excellence

Professor Gerald Isenberg, one of the most prolific producers in Hollywood and the recently-named inaugural holder of the Stephen K. Nenno Endowed Chair in Television Production, received the Caucus for Television Producers, Writers & Directors Lifetime Achievement Award this winter.

His peers honored Isenberg during the caucus’ 23rd Annual Dinner & Awards Ceremony on January 15 at the Beverly Hills Hotel during a ceremony that highlighted a lifetime of professional, artistic and academic excellence.

“I always knew that being part of this industry was a great privilege and that some day I’d be called to account for how I used that privilege,” Isenberg said. “I trust this recognition means I did okay.”

With a B.A. from Bowdoin College and an M.B.A from the Harvard Business School, Isenberg entered the field in 1964 at Columbia Pictures, rising to become assistant to President Abe Schneider. In 1968, he joined ABC-TV as executive in charge of production, supervising the creation of the first three years of the prestigious “Movie-of-the-Week” series.


Isenberg has been teaching at the School of Cinema-Television since 1994, when he became a full professor. He joined 11 other colleagues last fall who hold endowed chairs in the school.

Isenberg is currently chairman of the caucus and serves on the boards of the Santa Barbara International Film Festival and the National Closed Captioning Institute.

For more on the Caucus for Television Producers, Writers & Directors, please visit www.caucus.org.

Fellowship Of The Pen

Josh Schwartz ’99, creator/executive producer of the hit Fox series “The O.C.,” credits USC for helping him break into the entertainment business. Now he’s hoping to extend that chance to others by creating an annual scholarship for a writing student or students who have completed a television pilot script and its first-season synopsis.

“USC was an amazing experience for me, and it helped give me my big break when I was the beneficiary of a USC writing scholarship,” Schwartz said. “Being able to give another USC student the same opportunity is a real privilege and the least I could do.”

Schwartz, who studied screen and television writing and sold his first script to a major film studio during his junior year, has always generously volunteered his time to the students of his alma mater. In addition to establishing the scholarship, he is also a member of the Alumni Development Council (see “Sage Council,” page 1).

Beginning this year and continuing for the next decade, the Josh Schwartz Scholarship will be granted to undergraduate or graduate students registered and enrolled full time in the school’s Division of Writing for Screen & Television.

This year’s award went to Sarah Holtermann and Royal McGraw, both graduate students. Holtermann won for Most Blended Virgin, a contemporary comedy set in a Catholic high school, and McGraw for his Chicago-set ensemble pilot Lightning Cobras.

Writing Division Chair Howard A. Rodman is grateful that Schwartz has never forgotten his cinematic training ground. “We’re delighted,” he said. “All the more so that two such fine young writers have been honored.”

Cinema-Television Projects Win At Sundance And Slamdance

School of Cinema-Television students, faculty and alumni swept up key awards in the dramatic, documentary and short film categories at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival, as well as prevailing in the interactive games competition at the 2006 Slamdance Guerrilla Gamemaker Competition this winter.

The school also prevailed at Slamdance where Interactive Media Division graduate students Jenova Chen, John DeWeese, Vincent Diamante, Erin Dinehart, Aaron Meyers, Erik Nelson, Kellee Santiago, and Glenn Song won the Best Student Philosophy Award for their new game Cloud.

The following is a list of USC School of Cinema-Television alumni, students and faculty with projects at the 2006 Sundance and Slamdance festivals:

Sundance

PREMIERES
A Little Trip to Heaven—Produced by Joni Sighvatan ’85
Art School Confidential—Edited by Robert Hoffman ’92
Cargo—Written by Paul Laverty ’94, Produced by Juan Gordon ’95

DRAMATIC COMPETITION
Come Early Morning—Co-produced by Dan Etheridge ’92
In Between Days—Written and produced by Bradley R. Gray ’99

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION
Them—Produced by R.J. Cutler, Edited by Kate Amend, A.C.E.
TV Junkie—Co-directed and edited by Matt Radecki ’94, Co-produced by Gregory J. Lanesey ’95
The World According to Sesame Street—Edited by Kate Amend, A.C.E.

WordPlay—Edited by Doug Blush ’88
SPECTRUM
All Aboard! Rosie’s Family Cruise—Cinematography by Sandra Chandler ’88

Dreamland—Associate produced by Amott Zakai ’02
Open Window—Produced by Tom Barad ’74
Special—Co-written and co-directed by Hal Haberman ’00 and Jeremy Pasinmore, Produced by Ed Parks ’00 and Frank Mele ’80, Co-produced by Anden Fabrizio, Cinematography by Nelson Cragg, Ill ’03, Edited by Mike Suen ’02, Sound design by Adam King, Sound mix by Joe Dzuban ’04,
What Remains—Directed by Steven Cantor ’95
Who Needs Sleep—Co-directed and edited by Lisa Leeman

DRAMATIC SHORTS
Gutters Downwell Don’t Sing—Directed by Cedric Sherben ’03

ANIMATED SHORTS
The Whisk of Gobble Hill—Directed by Adam Parrish King, Produced and edited by Monique King, Faculty Mentor: Brenda Goodman, Additional Faculty Mentors (Animation and Camera): Woody Omens ’65 and Christine Paradilla

Slamdance

SPECIAL SCREENING FEATURES
Monday—Cinematography by Alice Brooks ’01

NARRATIVE FEATURES
The Other Side—Directed by Greg Bishop ’99, Associate produced by Craig Dabowski ’80, Sound design by Jamie Haddi ’00

ANIMATED SHORTS
Vandals—Directed by Chasen Kim ’04

GUERRILLA GAMEMAKER COMPETITION
Cloud—Student Creative Team: Jenova Chen, John DeWeese, Vincent Diamante, Erin Dinehart, Aaron Meyers, Erik Nelson, Kellee Santiago, Glenn Song, Advisor: Tracy Fullerton

We apologize if we missed anyone. Please contact Justin Wilson at 310.249.1570 or alumnirelations@cinema.usc.edu for more information or updates.

For more information:
www.caucus.org
Good Ole Summertime

At the School of Cinema-Television, June, July and August are hardly full of lazy days for the faculty and worldwide participants who venture to Los Angeles to take part in the intensely creative Summer Program.

And this year, in addition to taking classes ranging from production, writing and interactive media to animation and critical studies, the student body is also going to meet new Program Director David Weitzner, who brings with him a wealth of experience as a leading entertainment marketer, and as an adjunct instructor teaching in the Business of Entertainment program.

Weitzner succeeds Duke Underwood, who founded the Summer Program in 1985. “I’m extremely honored to build upon Duke’s legacy and the phenomenal job he’s done of making the Summer Program what it is today,” Weitzner said. “There’s a lot of work ahead, and one of my short-term goals is to increase enrollment without sacrificing the student experience and quality of the program.”

That program—which last year had a student body population of more than 350 participants from around the globe—is in great hands with Weitzner. From the marketing campaigns of T. E. The Extra-Terrestrial, the original Star Wars and Alien, to overseeing Warner Bros. and ABC Pictures entertainment business as vice president and general manager of the Entertainment and Leisure Division of Grey Advertising in New York, Weitzner’s illustrious 40-year plus career includes roles as a consultant, strategist, lecturer and member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Prior to establishing his own global marketing company where his clients ranged from PepsiCo to the WB Network, Weitzner served as president, Worldwide Marketing for 20th Century Fox, Universal Pictures, Embassy Pictures and Palomar Pictures. In the same position at MCA/Universal Studios Recreation Services Group, his team was responsible for the company’s theme parks and Universal CityWalk and coined the term “ride the movies” to describe King Kong and the other film-inspired attractions that grew to become the most popular in the park.

Whether it’s designing a marketing plan for a movie, strategizing for corporations like Honda and PepsiCo or directing the Summer Program, Weitzner said that listening and learning are always his first and most important tasks. “We’re all as passionate about teaching at the Summer Program as our students are in learning.”

Classes at the Summer Program are offered for university credit, although the applicant does not have to be a USC student to be eligible to enroll. For more information, please log on to www.uscsummerfilm.com.