



association of camera operators

October 18th 2019 ... a significant date

This quarters Presidents POV is my view from where I sit of the last 12 months.

The 10th Anniversary of the Association of Camera Operators and what a success that has been. Originally formed to give voice to maybe some would say a dwindling art within film making, it is now a strong, healthy and most importantly, recognised group of likeminded passionate people.



We have a membership close to 150 and growing all the time. Importantly, we still tackle the issues that affect our role and more.

Diversity, so much to be done here but the last couple of years has seen change. More women joining our ranks everyday and taking on roles within the association. 2019 saw our support for Lucy Bristow, Ilana Garrard and Aga Szeliga's ideas to form a database of women working on or around the camera. This led to a collaboration with Women Behind The Camera, two very successful one day workshops were put together to advance the skills of 24 women in the camera department. One a geared /remote head course and the second an introduction to Steadicam. 2020 will see a repeat of similar courses but with further focus on a more ethnically diverse intake.

We celebrated earlier in the year with a very well attended ACO Summer Party. This was a real highlight of recent ACO events and something I'm determined to repeat next year. Huge thanks especially to Jason Ellis and our incredible administrator Sham Whittaker.

To top a year full of stand out events, a party of about seven ACO members made their way to CAMERIMAGE in Torun, Poland. Matt Fisher and I spoke at a Q&A and we held a modest drinks party the following evening. I say modest because nothing compares to the extravaganza that is our many patrons parties...extraordinary events. Thank you Arri, Fujinon, Panavision and CVP\Arri. We have established a foothold in this remarkable festival and will be returning in greater numbers next year. Thank you Camerimage.

The anniversary date also coincides with me taking on the Presidents role... Not my natural comfort zone but a role that has given back so much. In all my talks, Q&A's and initiatives in the last year the overwhelming sense of fulfilment has made it completely worthwhile. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who gave their support to me and the association in the last 12 months but also to urge members that maybe haven't had a chance to contribute to get involved in 2020... it really is a great experience.

Sean Savage ACO President

The ACO + Women Behind The Camera



Present.....

Steadicam operation has seen little gender diversity since its inception. To encourage more women into this role, The ACO and WBTC (Women Behind The Camera) embarked on organizing a series of practical workshops.

To get the ball rolling, we decided to offer a one day 'taster session' for women to help them in their decision to join this exciting field. So on 5 October 2019 the first steadicam taster workshop, jointly organized by The ACO and WBTC, was held at Shift 4 in North London. (The idea was not only to give women camera technicians an insight into the art and physical realities of Steadicam operating but also to relate the subject to the best practises of good camera operating in general.) Everyone who was involved gave their time and equipment for free to help the cause.



Viola Wysznska takes instruction

Peter Robertson and Ilana Garrard organised the day. Sham Wittiker from the ACO gave support and Rafael Filomeno from Shift 4 kindly gave us use of their space and equipment. Fabrizio Sciarra also joined the team as a tutor for the day, alongside Peter and Ilana. Each tutor was joined by an assistant, Ross Dixon, Micaela Assad and James Thomas. We invited 12 women from varied backgrounds in the industry from operators to trainees, all of whom had applied to attend the workshop and had been selected for their enthusiasm for the art of steadicam operating.



Peter, Ilana and Fabrizio taught the basics but also kept the day fun: participants got to do lots of exercises where they got to do shots we had set up for them. They flew the rig to do a variety of shots including walk and talks and more complex hand over shots. Fabrizio spent a few hours pulling everyone around on his rickshaw, which gave all the attendees an idea of what operating is like without the weight, and also because it's so much fun. At the end of the day we held a Q and A session and tried to give our attendees an idea of what it is like working as a steadicam operator, as well as how to get started. For this, we were joined by fellow operators Max Rijavec, Svetlana Miko and Nathan Wong. All the women gave really positive feedback and several said that it was particularly the non-judgemental and relaxed environment that made them feel they were really able to learn something.

It was really encouraging to see so many women keen to get in the rig and seriously consider steadicam operating as a career choice. One attendee said that the idea of doing so was very daunting for her as a woman but that the day helped give her confidence to book in a full course and go for it. Ilana says " The day made me feel really positive that we can reach a point where gender diversity is something we no longer need to talk about, that a gender split crew is the norm in the camera department."

Written by Peter & Ilana



Fabrizio shows Megan Earl, the concept of using the rickshaw

FUJINON



Premista Cine Zoom lenses start shipping in the UK

The long-awaited Premista lenses have started to arrive in Europe. ARRI Rental, Movietech, Films @ 59 and Video Europe all have them working on different productions around the UK.

The 28-100mm T2.9 and 80-250mm T2.9-3.5 lenses have matching ring locations and are identical in size and weight to each other. They also offer full coverage for all current Large Format sensors and are compatible with Cooke /i and Zeiss eXtended Data systems.

If you would like to learn more or to arrange a test, please contact

marc.cattrall@fujifilm.com



association of camera operators

Membership news

New Full Members:

- Simon Jayes
- Zoe Goodwin-Stuart
- Edd Wright
- Ilana Garrard
- Steve Krasznai
- John Ferguson

New Associate Members:

- Richard Bradbury
- Jem Rayner
- Jonathan Tyler
- Thomas Walden
- Lilia Sellami
- James Burgess
- Tom Wade
- Robert Beck
- Matt Windon

New Lifetime:

- Roger Pearce

New Friend:

- Stephan Janes



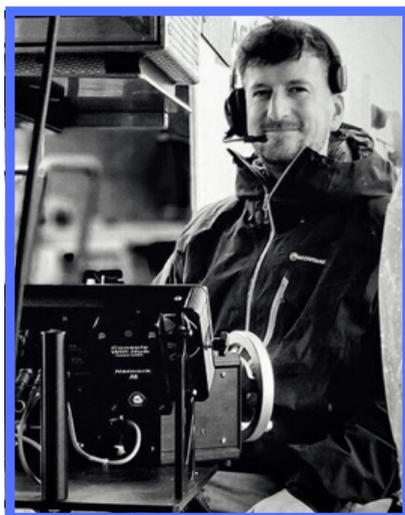
Whose operating on **WHAT?**

Busy times in the UK and world wide for ACO operators

- To be mentioned in the next newsletter please message Sham Whittaker with what you are up too and send some pics please we want to see you!



Princestone Clients



Dan Nightingale ACO

Peter Robertson ASSOC. BSC/ ACO Camera and Steadicam Operator is prepping camera & Steadicam on Cash Truck (working title), the new action thriller directed by Guy Ritchie, with DP Alan Stewart and starring Jason Statham.

Simon Baker ACO Camera and Steadicam Operator is filming A camera & Steadicam on blocks 1 & 3 of The Crown S4 with director Paul Whittington and DP Adriano Goldman ASC, ABC. Cast, includes Olivia Coleman, Tobias Menzies, Helena Bonham Carter,

Sean Savage ASSOC. BSC/ ACO Camera and Steadicam operator is currently shooting A camera & Steadicam on Fast and Furious 9, UK Splinter Unit with DP Callen Green and 2nd unit director JJ Perry. The main director is Justin Lin.

James Layton ACO Camera and Steadicam Operator is currently filming A camera & Steadicam on The Great, a series for Hulu, with director Matt Shakman and DP Anette Haellmigk. The series stars Elle Fanning as the eponymous Catherine The Great.

Joe Russell ACO Camera and Steadicam Operator is still shooting A camera/ steadicam on Killing Eve 3, the acclaimed thriller series is for Sid Gentle Films and BBC America, starring Sandra Oh and Jodie Comer. Joe is shooting on the new Alexa LF Mini, with Arri Signature Primes and Canon K35 lenses.

Peter Wignall ACO Camera and Steadicam Operator has been wrapping Steadicam and A & C cameras with the main and the 2nd unit on the feature 355, a spy thriller, with cast including Jessica Chastain, Penelope Cruz, Sebastain Stan, Diane Kruger and Lupita Nyang'o, directed by Simon Kinberg with DP Tim Morris-Jones. They shot in London and on locations in France, and Morocco.

Rob Hart ACO Camera and Steadicam Operator has wrapped camera / Steadicam on Alex Rider, a television series for Sony Pictures TV and Eleventh Hour Films, directed by Andreas Prochaska with DP Ben Wheeler. He has been shooting dailies on Enterprise, Killing Eve, Cold Feet and All Creatures Great and Small.

Tony Kay ACO / GBCT Camera and Steadicam Operator is still shooting A camera / Steadicam on Cursed, a fantasy series for Netflix, with DP Balazs Bolygo BSC and director Sarah O'Gorman. The cast includes Catherine Langford and Peter Mullan.

Cosmo Campbell ACO Camera and Steadicam Operator is filming B camera and Steadicam on Infinite, a Scifi feature for Paramount Pictures directed by Antoine Fugua with DP Mauro Fiore. The cast includes Mark Wahlberg, Rupert Friend and Wallis Day.

Tony Jackson ASSOC. BSC / GBCT/ ACO Camera and Steadicam is filming B camera/ Steadicam on A Discovery of Witches series 2. He is working with director Phillippa Langdale and DP Rasmus Arrildt.



Paul Donachie ACO

Whose operating what? cont.....

Nic Milner Assoc. BSC / GBCT / ACO Camera Operator has been shooting camera dailies and pickups on Dream Horse, Cursed, Hanna, The Love Birds. Nic also filmed Pidgeon Tunnel, the development shoot for Apple directed by Errol Harris. He is currently filming with the 2nd unit on a feature Eurovision.

Gary Clarke is currently shooting Last Letter From Your Lover, a feature for Blueprint Pictures directed by Augustine Frizzell with DP George Steele. They are filming on Red Monstro 8K.

Dan Nightingale ACO Camera and Steadicam Operator has been doing dailies on Vera for DoP Jamies Hicks and Hanna for DoP Ollie Downey and is now shooting Russell T. Davis' new show Boys, as A Camera and Steadicam for DoP David Katznelson and Director Peter Hoar for Channel 4.



Tony Kay ACO

Wendy Schneider Entertainment

Peter Cavaciuti is currently on "Wild Mountain Thyme" with Stephen Goldblatt

Michael Heathcote is currently on the series "Mrs. America" for FX

Christopher McGuire is currently on "Suicide Squad 2" for Warner Bros.



Tom Wilkinson ACO

Sara Putt Associates

Andrei Austin ACO, Associate BSC, SOC - continues working as B Camera Operator on Director Sir Kenneth Branagh's 'Death on the Nile'. He is working alongside DoP Harris Zambouloukos. The film stars Gal Gadot and Armie Hammer and is being shot at Longcross Studios.

Jon Beacham ACO - Camera Operator has recently travelled to Croatia where he is prepping on the new series of 'Carnival Row' for Amazon Studios. Jon will work on 2 blocks with DoP Sam McCurdy. Carnival Row stars Cara Delevigne and Orlando Bloom.

Tom Walden Associate ACO - is also in India working on a project called 'A Suitable Boy' an adaptation of Vikram Seth's novel and follows a young woman's search for love and identity in newly independent, post-Partition India. All episodes are Directed by Mira Nair.



Tom Walden Assoc ACO

James Leigh ACO - is working for The Forge on a project called 'Roadkill'. 'Roadkill' a four part contemporary political drama by Sir David Hare & starring Hugh Laurie Directed Michael Keillor and DoP Wojciech Szepel.

Whose operating what? cont.....

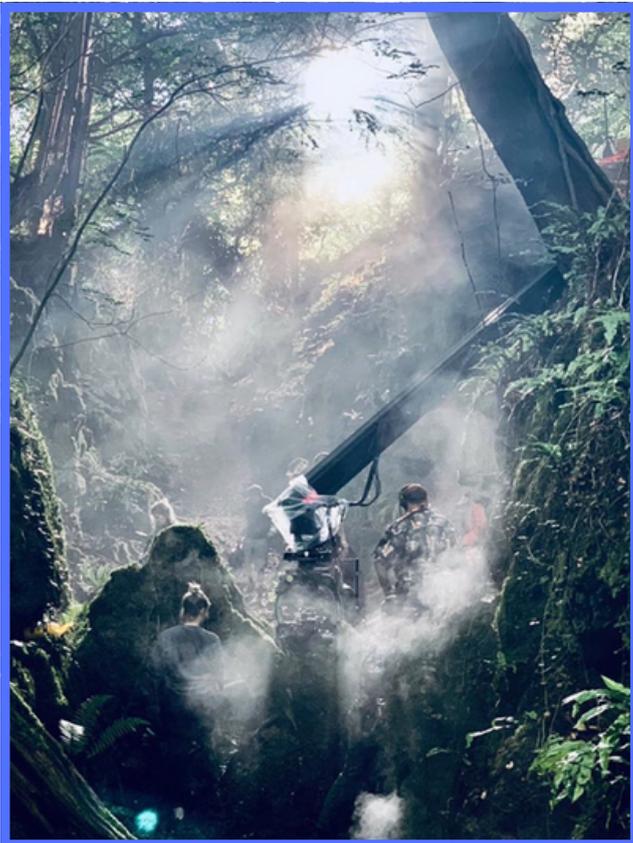
Danny Bishop ACO, Associates BSC, SOC - continues working in the US (Louisiana) on a project for Showtime/CBS entitled 'Your Honour'. 'Your Honour' is an adaptation from an Israeli series and is described as legal thriller that rips through all of New Orleans society. 'Your Honour' stars Bryan Cranston. Danny has been working on this series with Ed Berger (Director) and James Friend (DoP) who he worked with on the BAFTA winning 'Patrick Melrose'. Hes just started the second block with DoP John Lyndley ASC

Ed Clark ACO - Camera/Steadicam Operator continues working in Manchester on the Sci Fi series 'Intergalactic' for Tiger Aspect/Moonage Pictures. Directors include; Kieran Hawkes and Rebecca Johnson. DoP is Gary Shaw. The series is set 200 years in the future and is about a group of rogue female criminals.

Ilana Garrard ACO - since wrapping on the Feature Film 'Everybody is talking about Jamie' as B Camera/Steadicam Operator for Warp Films, Ilana has been busy working on 'The Pigeon Tunnel' for The Ink Factory and Director Errol Morris, as well as working on a music video for the band Coldplay with the DoP Cristina Dunlap.



Daniel Bishop ACO



Matt Poynter ACO

Vince McGahon ACO, Associate BSC - Vince has recently wrapped on the Netflix Film 'Eurovision' and is now prepping on his next film, 'Venom II'. This sequel stars Tom Hardy and has Director Andy Serkis at the helm and Bob Richardson as DoP. Vince will be working as B Camera/Steadicam Operator.

Julian Morson ACO, Associate BSC, GBCT - continues working with DoP Ben David on the Marvel Film 'The Eternals'. 'The Eternals' stars Angelina Jolie, Salma Hayek and Kit Harington and tells the story of immortal beings who lived on Earth and have shaped its history and civilisations.

Al Rae ACO, Associate BSC - is currently on location in Australia working with DoP Anthony Dod Mantle on a series called 'The Bear'. Based on a book entitled 'Shantaram', the series will tell the story of a heroin addicted prison escapee who reinvents himself in India. Filming will move to India later this month, returning again to Melbourne next year.



Arri Crew

Matt Poynter is currently A cam and steadicam on the second series of "His Dark Materials."



Dear all.....

This is a reminder that the Awards season is almost here.

For those of you that have worked on a Production and feel proud of your work.

Submissions for the TV -Drama- Award will open in November 2019

If submitting an entry for this Award be sure to read the full Criteria.
Just log onto our website after the 11th of November 2019

www.theoperatorsaward.com

The submissions period will be open to all Camera Operators and qualifying members of the ACO, BSC and GBCT and their Patrons to suggest an specific production the Operators or qualifying Member feels is best representative of their/the work during the qualifying period provided that the TV -Drama- Award Criteria and Rules are followed.

In the case a Camera Operator's work has been suggested by a Qualifying member, the suggested Camera Operator has to be informed and asked to supply application

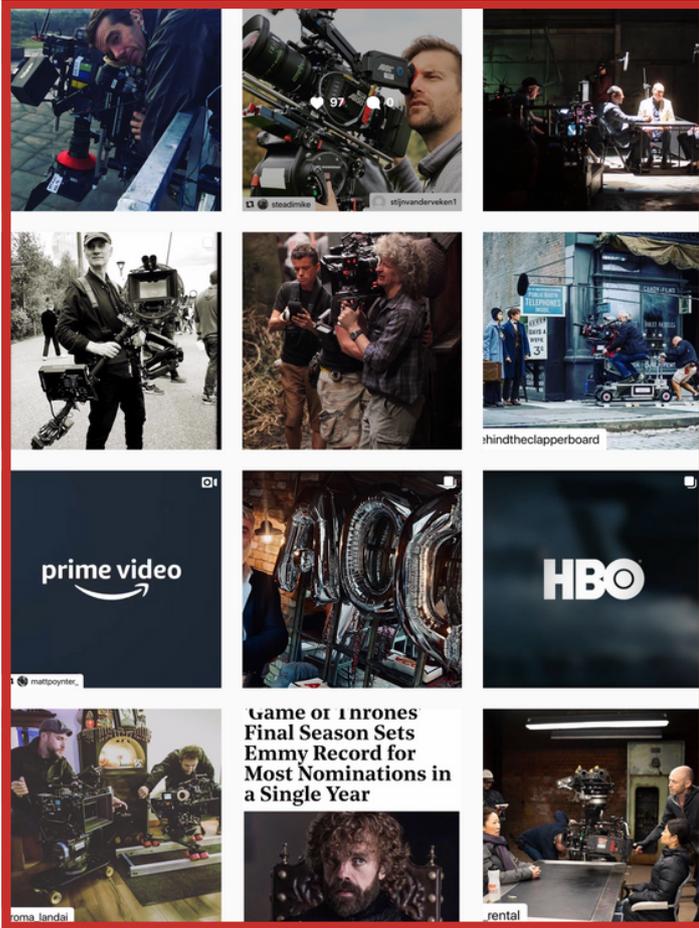


form and the necessary material and Vimeo link for inclusion. Open to all Television Dramas that have had their first transmission on British Television, terrestrial, cable or satellite, Netflix or other Internet channels during the qualifying period of 1st January 2019 to 10th November 2019. The applicant must carry 'A' Camera Operator credit for their entry OR where an 'A Camera Operator' feels a joint application with other Operators is appropriate, their names should be listed on the application too.

The applicants can only submit 1 production a year for entry. Submissions will be open from: 18th November 2019 to the 22nd of December 2019 At the <http://www.theoperatorsaward.com>

It is important to support the Awards as they represent our Craft.

Rodrigo Gutierrez



Do you know?

Social media is so important to spreading the work of the ACO and its operators.

Please will you send photos of you at work to editorial or please tag us on instagram @aco_uk

Over the coming year Sham will be reaching out to members to take over the ACO Instagram feed to show case the operators work and what we do. So please reach out if you'd like to be involved - otherwise expect a phone call. :)



@aco_uk



"I saw the photo in the long corridors at Pinewood studios shortly after Mike Frift had passed away this summer. It was typically Mike , always smiling and the consummate professional, shown he on a Carry on Movie

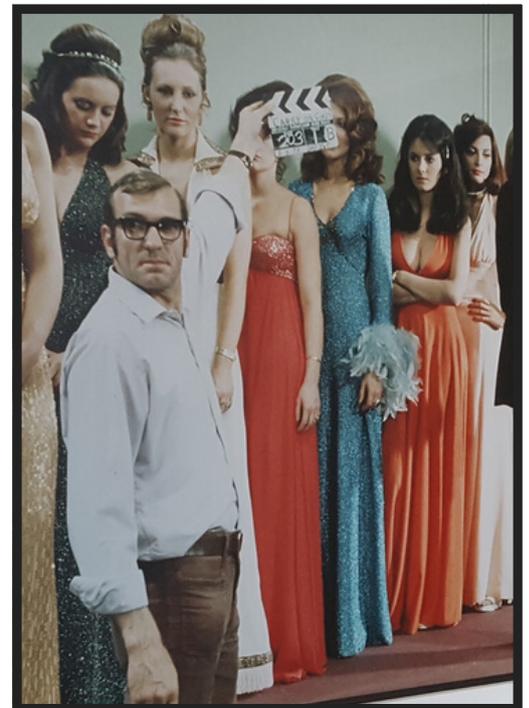
He will be remembered by many in the camera department for his kindness and courtesy and as a terrific example representing the very best of british camera technicians.May he rest in peace." From Jamie Harcourt

Mike Frift 1941 - 2019 - Star Wars / Licence to Kill / Robin Hood

**PLEASE
CREDIT
THE
ACO**

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO GET PRODUCTION
TO USE THE ACO CREDITS**

**AT THE START OF A SHOOT
WRITE ACO AFTER YOUR
SURNAME ON THE START
FORM AND MENTION TO
PRODUCTION ITS PART OF
YOUR CREDIT...**



CVP & ARRI

CREATIVE SPACE

One of the newest and most interesting places to meet up with colleagues in London is rapidly becoming the CVP | ARRI Creative Space, located on Charlotte Street. It's central, it's extremely stylish, it's full of state-of-the-art facilities, and what's more it's free; which are four impressive attributes given that it started its conceptual life as a high-end ARRI showroom.

The idea soon grew though, with the company looking to reach out first to industry affiliations (it has, for example, a long-standing relationship with the ACO that has seen both organisations collaborate on training and events) and then to the wider creative community as a whole. So, gradually the idea of a Fitzrovia townhouse simply stuffed full of the latest ARRI kit mutated into that of a professional networking hub for the industry built over two floors, though it never lost the ARRI kit along the way.

The result is a place where people can meet and network in the centre of London without having to camp out in the corner of coffee shops. As such membership is free and members can use the venue for meetings, hot-desking, board meetings, events, screenings, award adjudication and more. Indeed, the screening area features a 77" 4K HDR Ultra HD Smart OLED TV with Dolby Vision, and Dolby Atmos Sound.

And they can have the sort of hands on product experience that they could only otherwise get at ARRI in Munich, but in a totally unpressured environment. CVP is ARRI's largest UK distributor, and its independent status means that customers can come in for a chat and discuss what they are trying to achieve, or even just have a play with the various cameras, lenses, and accessories in the building.



It's a neat concept. Members receive exclusive access to monthly technical workshops on a variety of topics, designed not only for those working professionally in technical roles, but also for people in non-technical roles who wish to gain more insight. The CVP | ARRI Creative Space also hosts regular events with guest speakers, is becoming a regular home to organisations such as RISE, and it is planning on stepping up its social and networking events programme that it promises will differ considerably from the traditional industry drinks evenings. Recent events have included a mini-Oktoberfest and converting the space into a pop-up restaurant.

Indeed, one of its key events to be hosted in early 2020 will see ACO president, Sean Savage, talking about his experiences on Game of Thrones, with footage, scene breakdowns, and a Q&A session at the end.

Affordable, multi-function work spaces are hard to come by in London, so the CVP | ARRI Creative Space is an extremely welcome option for the creative community, with the twin added bonuses of being both an extremely good networking space and of being stocked with cutting edge ARRI equipment.



Opening hours are
Mon - Fri, 09.00 - 17.30.

For more details contact
creativespace@cvp.com.

CAMERAIMAGE ACO NOVEMBER 2019

By Sean Savage ACO



The ACO went to Camerimage.

For the first official visit by the ACO and to continue our 10th anniversary celebrations, seven of our members made the journey to the beautiful historic city of Torun in Poland. This was my first trip and it certainly lived up to all of those stories I'd ever heard about this unique festival.

When we talk of film festivals we may think of the classics, Cannes, Sundance etc but Camerimage is different, it concentrates almost entirely on the talent behind the lense and not the directors, writers and actors. There is a much more focused interest around the DP's and the crew that bring the pictures to life. The ACO, for its opening visit, decided to hold a Q&A on the art of camera operating where our intention was to educate, spread the word that operators are a valuable asset to any project...

The 1hr 45min session was very ably and kindly moderated by Mark Carey from The Northern Film School and the panellists were Matt Fisher and myself. Mark is instrumental in running the Aesthetica Short Film Festival in York each year, an event that the ACO attends on another Q&A. It was well attended and some great questions asked.

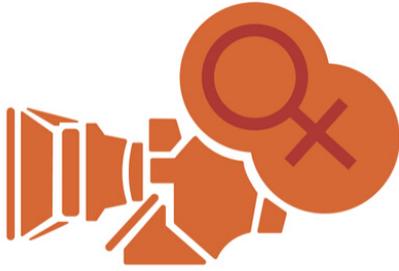
Many of our Patrons were there, Red Digital, Fujinon, Arri, Panavision and CVP Arri who also very kindly sponsored our ACO drinks on the Friday evening.

All in all considering it was our first foray into the world of Camerimage.. I felt it was a great success and hopefully we can have an annual presence from now on. It really is a very inspiring week.

Thanks to all that helped our trip go so well, thank you to our generous patrons and the camera operators who attended. Thanks to Audra at the BSC who got us access to most places and our Sham Whittaker who coordinated a great deal from London. To Camerimage for hosting us. Finally, a special thank you to Aga Szeliga who had so much to do with the success the visit was.

Sean Savage President ACO





GEARED & REMOTE HEAD WORKSHOP

Women behind the camera in conjunction with **Focus24**, **CVP** and the **ACO**, ran a GEARED & REMOTE HEAD workshop with the Focus24 team - Mo Akyildiz, Ben Mitchell & Leanne Gullifer - who invited us to their great space and put on this amazing workshop. CVP supplied them with extra equipment. James Davis ACO gave up his day off to tutor the group and he also supplied them with a Porsche Cayenne Ultra Arm car.

A group of brilliant women (and one little girl!) attended, from trainees to DOP's, and they were able to practise in a super friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The idea of the workshop was to encourage women to start using the wheels and keep practising in their own time in a rental house of their choice.



This is something everyone can do by themselves and each time they do, there is a marked progression in confidence and ability. The rental houses are open to anyone coming and practising, and the WBTC has made a connection with many of them to allow WBTC members easy access.

"The geared head workshop is absolutely invaluable for experienced crew who want to get more hands on experience with a geared head. We all manage to sneak a bit of time here and there on set, but to be talked through it step by step and spend the day practising is extremely useful for moving forward and progressing in the camera department. It's a safe place to ask questions to industry professionals at the height of their game in order to equip yourself with further knowledge and skills. I cannot recommend it enough!!"



"Working together with WBTC was such a great opportunity for us at Focus24. It is such an important aspect of our industry to bring attention to and I really look forward to doing more workshops together.

"Mo @ Focus24



ACO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DECEMBER 8TH 2019 10:30PM @ PANAVISION



ACO CHRISTMAS DRINKS



DEC 11TH DECEMBER
@ THE CLEVELAND ARMS 6-11:30PM



IS YOUR PROFILE PIC MISSING??

Please can you take the time to email your picture to the ACO editorial for the new website. A lot of people went to a great deal of effort to get the new website built and we'd appreciate your response... ASAP

Please send to editorial@aco.net



Magnificent 8

8 questions to Aga Szeliga



1) What was it that got you into being a camera operator?

What was it that got you into being a camera operator?

For as long as I remember, I have always loved moving images and felt that the camera department was at the heart of film making. I joined the industry thinking I wanted to become a DoP, and I shot my first feature film long before I became a GBCT camera trainee.

I wrapped in Wales on *The Huntsman: Winter's War* as Phedon Papamichael's assistant (making lighting diagrams) and two days later I arrived in Poland where I had an opportunity to operate a camera on a romantic comedy for Polish DoP, Bogumił Godfrejów PSC, having assisted him a year earlier on a feature shot in Sarajevo. Since I had been working as a 2nd AC in the UK, I kept quiet about it in London, assuming it was a one-off, and worrying this could negatively affect my assisting work, as people here might have not seen my operating work as legitimate, having skipped the traditional route up through focus pulling. After the comedy, I shot two more features with Bogumił, one in Mexico and the other in the States (New Mexico), and I fell in love with the role of camera operator.

I was very lucky to be given lots of freedom in deciding shots, and took a lead in the dialogue with the director and the actors. It was the first time since joining the industry that I felt in my element. I found returning to the UK film industry afterwards pretty straightforward, despite having been away for a long time.

Assisting work was waiting for me, but for the first time since joining the industry I wasn't enjoying it. I really missed being creative. I also found it confusing introducing myself to people as a 2nd AC and Camera Operator, and tended to pretend I was either entirely the former or the latter, depending on whether I was within or outside of the UK. However, I was encouraged by several operators who urged me to go for it and to drop the assisting. At the same time, I met two wonderful women Lucy Bristow ACO and Ilaria Fulvio 1st AC, who each gave me very helpful advice and, through that encouragement, I sold off all my assisting gear and took my first steps in exclusively pursuing an operating career.

2) Describe the brief outline of *A Confession*, process of working on and your approach.

A Confession is a 6-part ITV drama starring Martin Freeman. The series tells the real-life story of Detective Superintendent Steve Fulcher, who's actions were deemed to have breached police protocol to catch a killer in a move that ended up costing him his career and reputation.

Directed by Paul Andrew Williams with cinematographer Vanessa Whyte on *A* camera. I had never worked with either of them previously, and I joined for the last 6 weeks of principal photography as *B* camera operator. It was a first time I had joined a shoot without any involvement in pre-production (no recces or prep) so I had to prioritise adapting very quickly to the rhythm that had been established, without causing any disturbance to the shooting style and the crew.

Ness filled me in with their approach to the documentary-style hand-held shooting. I watched the rushes and read the script just before I joined them. Ness and Paul had previously worked with each other so they had established a very good working relationship (and friendship).

The dynamic between them was very good so it was very easy for me to collaborate with them. Paul has a great sense of humour which was so precious considering the subject matter, especially as we had the victims' families visiting us on set. They were very supportive of what Paul was doing. Unless the locations were too small, we would shoot two cameras simultaneously (Minis mainly with zooms as Paul liked lots of movement in the shot). Ness gave me lots of freedom in positioning the B camera but would also be very helpful each time I needed her suggestions. Lovely Jason Ellis ACO joined us on A camera for the last 3 weeks for interior car work and additional operating.

3) How did you get the job on A Confession?

Ness was looking for a B camera operator to replace her previous one for the final 6 weeks of the job and my two DoP friends Katie Goldschmidt and Tasha Back recommended me to Ness. I'd met Ness before at Camerimage in Poland and we had a really lovely chat on the phone. She was aware that I hadn't worked for a while due to my pregnancy and a maternity leave. I felt a bit out of touch with the industry (having shot my previous feature almost two years ago), I was still breastfeeding and was sleep deprived, but at the same time I felt that given an opportunity I could manage the job. It was really wonderful that I could talk about everything so openly. Frankly I can't imagine having the same conversation with many HOD's but hopefully I'm wrong. Towards the end of the job I thanked her for taking the risk in employing me knowing my situation. She laughed and said that she didn't take any risk as she employed me based on my showreel and reputation.

4) What was the best advice given to you as an operator?

I was doing some dailies on Pennyworth under the wing of A camera operator Sean Savage. On one day I told him I was quite overwhelmed by the scale and amount of work we had to get done. He took out his sides from his pocket and flicked through it to the heading of the scene with which we were starting the day. He read it out loud and said: 'You start with this and forget everything else'. So simple, common sense really but it just reminded me that I apply the same principles to my job no matter if I'm shooting a high end TV drama or a low budget music video.



5) Introduce us to your camera & grip team.

With a female DoP, myself on B camera, the amazing 1st AC Laura Dinnett, 2nd AC Ky Brasey, and our trainee Kelly Smith, it was a refreshingly diverse crew. I think it takes a lot of adjustment each time you join a crew which has been shooting for a long time already but this bunch made me feel welcome from the first moment we met. In the past, I trained under and assisted some of the best focus pullers in the industry, so I was positively surprised and impressed with how good Laura already was.

Shooting documentary style with camera roaming and multiple characters in the scene with the operator doing things differently in each take can be difficult and exhausting but Laura was always spot on, and remarkably calm! Ky and Kelly were both very good at their jobs, and really took care of me. And I had so many stimulating conversations - they were all so much fun to work with.

Reece Hearnshaw was the key grip and Dan Huntley was the B camera grip. They were both fantastic. We were shooting a lot in cars, so it was so good that they knew what worked best in terms of stabilising the camera, especially as quite often we had to shoot squashed up or in awkward positions.

Laura, Dan or Ky would would always take the camera off me as 'cut' was announced and I would never get the camera till the very last minute before going for a take. After 6 weeks of shooting hand-held, my back never hurt.

6) Can you tell us a memorable scene or something you did on A Confession?

I shot quite a bit of second unit for Ness and one day I was up in a cherry picker with Dan Huntley, waiting for everyone on the ground to do their last touch ups. We were slightly above the tree line of a forest covered in snow, and in the brief respite, we were lucky enough to find ourselves watching the sunset. It was very evocative, and reminded me of my travels: people and places.

I felt so lucky and privileged to be working in the industry, travelling the world on some great projects. What a fantastic job we have got!



7) What films inspired you to pursue career in the film industry?

I grew up in communist Poland, so I loved everything western, and especially American films. I remember when my parents swapped their old B&W telly to a colour one, I was absolutely hypnotized by the richness of colour in American westerns and musicals (especially widescreen Technicolor), the panache, escapism, camera movement and the vast unspoiled landscapes.

Our national television played one American film every Sunday lunch time, and for me it was the biggest event of the week. I still get the same feeling when I watch films.

8) What are you currently working on at the moment?

I just wrapped on The Dig (Netflix), I was shooting B Camera for Mike Eley BSC, directed by Simon Stone and starring Carey Mulligan and Ralph Fiennes. I had three weeks on it, doing hand held and crane work, and loved every single bit of it.

It was my first job for Mike and he is such a great collaborator that I find myself missing the job a lot. Andrew, my husband, also works in the industry as a boom operator and we take turns in working as we have a 2 year old daughter at home. We both agreed that we will take turns in working as while she is small we would like her to have at least one of her parents, and both of us being out from 6am to 9pm is not realistic.

The industry isn't ideally suited to parenting, but it is possible if we have the support of our partners or family, and fortunately Andrew has been more than happy to take over domestic life from me when I have had the opportunity to go back to work.

Written by Aga Szeliga