

Association of Camera Operators

# IN THE FRAME

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Throw Back Peter Wignall  
- discusses *Snatch*

*Terminator: Dark Fate*  
by Christopher T.J. McGuire ACO

BBC's *Dracula*  
Daniel Nightingale ACO



Roger Deakins BSC | ASC  
Charlie Rizek  
& Peter Cavicutiti ACO  
talk operating on

'1917'

Operators Award Winners, Nominees and Bios

This newsletter was put together for some months prior to the epidemic that we now face. We are sending out in its original form, to hopefully give you something to read of interest and enjoy in these troubling times. ACO editorial

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Dear Members and Patrons,

I'm sure as you read this, that almost all the ACO membership will have been stood down from their current projects. 2020 showed great promise and this interruption is frustrating but nothing compared to implications this virus has for many vulnerable people.

We have all been made aware of how important it is to remain at home and I for one am following this advice.

We have workshops and events planned for later in the year and I hope to see you there when we hopefully will be clear of this epidemic.

Please look after yourself and your family.

Sean Savage  
President ACO

**Association of Camera Operators**



**Camera operator** Tony Kay heads off-road filming new fantasy series *Cursed* for Netflix, with the challenge of shooting major action sequences across varying location terrain. We chose to use the TYR arm and tracking vehicle from Duncan at BATT.

**"Working** with the Sony Venice and Rialto tethered camera system provided by Movietech meant we were able to reduce the payload on the Mini Libra head/ TYR Arm and still shoot 6K 2:1."

**Pictured:** Tony Kay ACO GBCT (right) with Mini Libra/TYR arm technician Matt McCarthy

## PRESIDENTS POV



**The last three** months have been a busy time for the ACO. The Operators' Night hosted by the BSC took on a new look and was attended by a healthy number of operators. Our dear friend Seamus McGarvey gave the toast on behalf of the cinematographers and took the opportunity to rejoice and effuse in all what a camera operator can bring to a production. We were so moved by this that we immediately made Seamus an Honorary Member of the Association.

**He kindly** accepted our invitation and we all toasted it with a great deal of beer at the ACO Christmas drinks, held as ever at Mr Mathieson's excellent Cleveland Arms. Come the New Year, we all got dressed up in our finest to attend the BSC Awards Night at the Grosvenor House Hotel. Another amazing evening, with our very own Joe Russell ACO picking up his second 'TV Operator of the Year Award' against some extremely tough competition! American Geoff Haley SOC won for the magnificent *Joker* and as a result, was invited to join us in the ACO. We're delighted that Geoff has accepted. His work really is extraordinary.

**We're also** privileged to gain the support of two new patrons: Walter Klassen and VMI.TV.LTD. We look forward to building our relations with both companies as we concentrate our efforts in furthering our professional status. A board meeting at this time decided we should ask the membership if they thought Associate Members could be given the same voting rights as Full Members. The decision was approved and as a result, we have invited Agnieszka Szeliga to represent Diversity and Eco on said board. Agnieszka will also make up the voting numbers as after ten amazing years of unquestionable loyalty, Philip Sindall ACO announced he was stepping to one side and indeed retiring from full time operating. Some friends and family hosted a surprise party, again at the Cleveland Arms and surprise Philip we did! Heartfelt words were spoken about the wonderful operator/legend. I feel we will still see plenty more of Philip.

**The BSC Expo** in Battersea Park again gave us an opportunity to show off our association. An excellent ACO stand was manned by some enthusiastic members with special mention going to Ian Fox who volunteered to help out, having come over from the States to shoot *Jurassic World*. We're all about highlighting our skills as operators and every time I've encouraged a member to help me with an event, the overwhelming reaction is the sense of fulfillment they've experienced. Please, please sign up for these occasions. We're privileged to be where we are.

**Let's give something back. I trust in you all.** Sean Savage ACO

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constructed and  
edited by Daniel Bishop**

**additional editing by  
Rosie Lewis**



# TERMINATOR

## D A R K F A T E

BY

## Christopher T.J. McGuire ACO

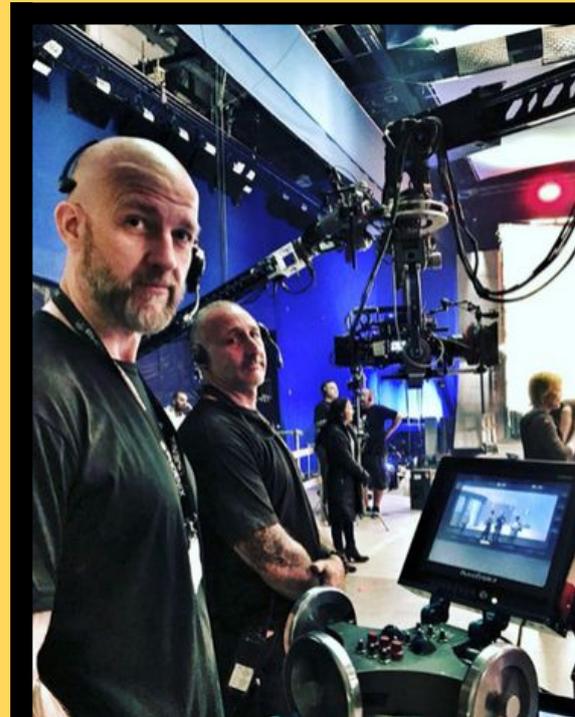
**The concept** for *Terminator* is and was one of the best I'd ever seen! Thankfully my Dad allowed me to see the movie before I was 18. Hence, it'll always be a special movie for me and being asked to work on a new chapter in the franchise was a dream come true. I'd worked with Director of Photography Ken Seng on additional photography for *Baby Driver* and we had got along great – so the ride on *Terminator* was set to be a fun one. The opening shot after the archive montage is a developing shot that starts by looking into the surf breaking on the beach, pulls back to reveal a skull in the sand, and develops into T-800 Terminators walking out of the sea blasting their cannons. This was a huge VFX shot that was

pre-visualised to perfection by the amazing director Tim Miller. We used a 45' MovieBird to pull the Arri LF across the surf and beach, to land on a predetermined shot, for a morph into the present day. This was the first day of shooting and set the precedent for how the show was going to be photographed. We decided that with the high volume of VFX, we should shoot off the Technocrane for most of the moves. Our Libra Technician Gareth Viner had helped me use the Libra Control Processor as a hand held unit – utilizing its internal gyros to simulate a hand-held feel with the Libra Remote head. I'd already experienced this way of working with the head on *Godzilla: King of Monsters* with Larry Sher A.S.C. This was also especially useful for fight sequences where we mounted the head on a dolly and our Key / Dolly Grip Guy Micheletti moved the camera easily. When we needed more control I would revert back to the classic wheel configuration. Another sequence that dictated that we use the wheels, was the chase through the car assembly plant, where we preceded Dani, Diego and Grace. The Libra was mounted to a Go-Kart driven by Guy, ahead of the cast as they ran full pelt away from *The Rev-9*, played by Gabriel Luna.

**We had** the great fortune of having Adam Coles as our Key 1st Focus Puller and Tibor Gyulas as 2nd AC. Adam brought a great energy to the production and he himself was sure to make the most of the experience.

*"Terminator for me was a great experience. I got the opportunity to work with a whole new crew on an iconic movie. Ken Seng, our DP, was a fantastic guy to have as our leader. Myself and Chris, along with key grip Guy, quickly formed a close bond, which is vital on a movie of this scale. We had great fun constructing and developing shots, from Steadicam, hand held, pursuit vehicles, camera rigs and a lot of crane work. One particular shot, again very iconic to fans of Terminator, was the moment Arnold walks out of his house. We designed a low angle crane shot to follow his boots down the steps, and crane up to a close-up as he puts his sunglasses on. Classic! The first day with Arnold was a great day, Chris and I just kept grinning to each other!. I'll always have very fond memories of this movie, and can't wait to have the opportunity to work with Ken and Chris again soon"* **Adam Coles.**

**Another great** counterpart was Lazlo Billie, our local B-Camera Operator, and 1st AC Chris Summers. They brought along a great enthusiasm to complement the A camera shots with some great angles alongside.





**L to R**  
**Ken Seng,**  
**Chris McGuire,**  
**Arnold,**  
**Adam Coles**  
**Tibor Gulyas**

Although we shot mostly off various cranes, we did mount the Libra on a dolly for specific sequences, with one of them involving the ensemble for the main exposition of the movie. We laid dance floor in Arnold Schwarzeneggers' character - Carl's cabin home and choreographed different moves around the room, landing on the different characters. Because the tension pivoted around Linda Hamilton (Sara Conner), it was paramount to design the moves around her. As always Guy Micheletti gracefully guided the Dolly / Remote head around and we were efficiently able to cover the sequence easily. The scene in the Immigrant Detention Center also called for us to use the Libra / dolly setup, but this time it climaxed with Guy riding the dolly while navigating it at full speed ahead of The Rev-9, after being unsuccessfully restrained by the border guards. As a main unit we shot a lot of the action sequences with the lead actors, but obviously as with large VFX action projects, the 2nd Unit was extremely important for the hardcore action photography. Graham Hall (Albert) and Gary Spratling came over for many of the car sequences involving The Edge and Dean Bailey in Madrid, but when they became unavailable we were able to bring my very good friend Kenny Groom in to Operate 2nd Unit.

*"After landing in Budapest I was whisked straight to Origo Studios for a meeting with my DP Bruce McCleery. Bruce kindly went through our work schedule for the forthcoming weeks and for me it was great to work with someone who does their homework and planning to a tee - knowledge is king in my book. It was great comfort to find out very quickly that our director Phil Silvera was someone who also spent a lot of time planning and working out our shots that we had to do. It's my third time working in Budapest and there are some great technicians and nice people there. I had one old face with me, Brad Larner, for whom we go back to when time started and my great friend Chris McGuire, who was the main operator on the first unit and was most helpful when giving me feedback from DP Ken Seng. It was a good film to work on, as it seemed that everyone was on the same page between the main and second unit."* **Kenny Groom**

**The inflight** fight sequence with the C-130 was a mammoth task for all aspects of production, including SFX, Lighting, Stunts and Camera; a huge undertaking for everyone to create a plan to cover the beats within the sequence. As well as the Libra, we ended up using an Oculus head in Matrix mode, allowing us to utilize the crane to its fullest. Being able to flip the head horizontally, the compact profile enabled us to get to everywhere we needed in the plane. As well as some crazy rigs from Guy and the Grips (including local Key Attila Szucs with his guys), we achieved some fantastic shots, everyday of the shoot.



## spot the weapon





**I** will always be extremely proud of the final product that is *Dark Fate*. The concept of Terminator will always attract interest. In my eyes, *Dark Fate* was a great addition to the series, no matter what the new age of internet trolls think!

**As with ALL** the projects I'm lucky to work on, I always hope for a Cohesive team that works and responds well with each other. After all, we are a team working towards the same goal.

**A movie** that looks great and is viscerally narrative in its photography.

**CHRISTOPHER T.J. MCGUIRE ACO**

**I'll Be back...**



*"As you can imagine it was an incredible privilege working on the last three Star Wars films. As a teenager I well remember going to the Empire Cinema to watch the latest epic and never would have dreamt that one day I would be filming on the colossal film sets and staring down the lens filming these legendary characters."*

*The whole process of working on this film and using 35mm cameras as they did 30 years ago, was special indeed. There is something magical about 'film' itself, as it purrs through the camera that just makes filming so exciting."*

**Gary Spratling ACO**





He tortured himself (emotionally and physically) on a daily basis – the pressure for us to nail each take was palpable, partly because every take was so vastly different, AND because you didn't want him to risk self-injury by going again due to a technical problem on our end. Larry Sher's masterful and arresting lighting was both moody yet still forgiving enough to consistently allow the camera to move 360 degrees. And our A camera 1st AC Greg Irwin's impeccable and intuitive focus-pulling ensured that we could shoot the entire film extremely improvisationally.

# CONGRATULATIONS GEOFF HALEY - WINNER FEATURE OPERATOR AWARD

*For 'The Joker'*

**Filming Joker** was a daring proposition for a lot of folks on the production – myself included. The two years prior I spent sequestered on three Marvel movies back to back - *Infinity War*, *Captain Marvel*, and *End Game*. I enjoyed unprecedented creative input, fun, breezy scripts, and eye-popping budgets nothing short of decadent. And even though *Joker* could technically still be considered a “comic book movie,” it was fundamentally different in some crucial ways. There would be no blue-screens, motion capture, previs, or grown men parading around in latex unitards. We'd be shooting primarily on location, with real people behaving in REAL ways – in and around New York city, which was dressed up to portray Gotham at the height of the worst garbage strike in the city's history. The contrast between this and my Avengers experience could not have been more stark. (Pun intended) The first thing that struck me about *Joker* was the script, which I read a month before principle photography. It's fair to say that my initial reaction was ... nervousness. The world of the film read harsh, relentless, and non-empathetic. In the hands of the wrong actor or misguided direction, projects like these can easily be driven off a cliff. But from day one of shooting, Joaquin's performance felt both grounded and surreal at the same time, and it drew me in completely. Technically, I let a lot of cringe-worthy operating stuff go on my end, for the sake of chasing “truth” and protecting Joaquin's performance. Joaquin is the kind of actor who submits so completely to his role that you begin to worry about his safety.



We shot with the Alexa 65 large format camera. A beastly, heavy power-hungry thing, that is particularly sadistic in steadicam and handheld mode, but after 2 years of using the same camera on the Marvel projects, I was somewhat used to it. As an operator, one of the most creatively gratifying moments of *Joker* occurred the day we shot a pivotal scene in a dingy bathroom set. As per the script, Arthur was meant to race into the bathroom carrying a gun, hide it behind the toilet, and frantically wash his bloody hands off at the sink. That morning, however, after Todd Phillips conferred with Joaquin privately, the decision was made to secretly change the scene - I was meant to have no idea how it would be different, so I could experience and react to the moment spontaneously. Todd had asked Hildur Gudnadottir, the film's composer, to record a few thematic tracks for *Joker* ahead of principle photography (a master-stroke on Todd's part). I remember, after we hit sticks, nervously standing in the bathroom with my handheld camera as Joaquin raced in, slammed the door, and collapsed against a wall. Gradually his frantic breathing gave way to an eerie calm as the air suddenly filled with one of the most hauntingly sorrowful and exquisite pieces of music I have ever heard. Then, out of the corner of my eye ... Joaquin's foot began to sway - I lowered the camera to ground level, and allowed myself to get lost in the moment. I felt strangely hypnotized, like a cat following a string, chasing with my camera as Joaquin performed a trance-induced, spontaneous dance – it was his fateful transformation into the Joker. It felt volatile and truthful and immediate. Capturing an emotionally powerful spontaneous moment, accompanied by a mesmerizing musical score, is every operator's dream – that just doesn't happen ... and I will never forget it.

# Feature film operator nominees



## Stan and Ollie was a great job.

Essentially a modest budget period piece driven by the brilliant performances of the two leads, Steve Coogan and John C Reilly, we tried to reflect the shooting style of the time and particularly the Laurel and Hardy movies themselves. We shot primarily single camera with an Alexa SXT and Cooke S4's framing for 2.35:1.

**Dale Myrand** moved to Los Angeles California in 1984 to attend film school at Columbia college. While attending classes

he also got a job as a prep technician at Otto Nemenz in Hollywood. After finishing school, he started to work as a 1st assistant camera on a variety of features, made for TV movies, and music videos. Early projects included *Death Wish 4*, U2's *Rattle and Hum*, and *Monsters of Rock*, live in Moscow.

He teamed up with Cinematographers Bryon England and Jack Conroy in the early 90's and moved more into the feature film world. Sam Shepard's *Silent Tongue* and the Stephen King story *Sometimes They Come Back* were both early A camera credits. In the mid 90's he joined the Dante Spinoti team on the Movie *Heat*. He consequently worked on other projects from that era such as *LA Confidential*, *Phenomenon* and *Seven*. In 2000 he moved up to operator. Jimmy Muro introduced him to Paul Cameron and he worked on *Gone in 60 Seconds* and *Swordfish* with them. He also worked with on a variety of other features such as *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*, *Collateral*, and *Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang*. Cinematographer Bruce McCleary brought him on to both of JJ Abrahams Star Trek films, as well as *Super 8*.

In 2006 he heard from Steve Yedlin. Dale had been recommended by a mutual friend. It would be 3 years before their schedules meshed and in 2009 they finally met on the set of the Kevin Spacey feature *Father of Invention*. Rian Johnson stopped in New Orleans for a visit and soon after, they were all back there for the feature film *Looper*. Dale and Steve have collaborated on several films since then. Dale said that after their first day together, he felt like he had met his new best friend. In the fall of 2018 they rejoined Rian in Boston for the project in current release, *Knives Out*. Dale is looking forward to the just announced sequel to *Knives Out*.

## Knives out

Coverage was relatively simple with additional cameras used for re-creations of Stan and Ollie's stage routines and some crowd replication for the various theatres we shot in around the country, such as Hackney Empire, Bristol Hippodrome and The Old Rep Theatre in Birmingham. Other locations included The Savoy Hotel, Grand Central Railway Loughborough and Bristol Waterfront, as well as West London Film Studios for a set build of the Savoy Hotel interior.

The most complicated set-up was for the opening scene which lasts around six minutes and appears as mostly a single continuous take, actually comprising of three different locations. Starting in a 1930's Hollywood dressing room (Eltham Palace), continuing out into a busy studio exterior (Pinewood standing in for Hal Roach Studios on a Sunday) and ending inside a Stage set as they are about to perform one of the dance routines from *Way Out West* (Twickenham Studios Stage 1). Using a combination of careful framing, stop pulls and a bit of VFX magic, the transitions hopefully appear fairly seamless. Thanks must go to a great crew particularly 1st AC Kim Vinegrad and Key Grip Kevin Foy and of course DP Laurie Rose BSC who asked me to do the job with him in the first place." **Vince Mcgahon.**



by gnet

2011 Mike Proudfoot  
Harry Potter and the  
Deathly Hallows: Part 2

2012 David Worley  
The Girl with the  
Dragon Tattoo

2013 Peter Roberts  
Anna Karenina

2014 Peter Taylor  
Gravity

2015 Chris Haarho  
Birdman:  
Or (The Unexpected  
Virtue of Ignorance)

2016 P. Scott Sakamo  
The Revenant

2017  
Peter Cavaciuti  
Allied

2018  
Des Whelan  
The Darkest  
Hour

Sponsored by



David Luckenbach operating on

## Le Mans 66

Le Mans 66 at Willow Springs Raceway in CA.



**Ronford-Baker**  
CAMERA SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY

. "John Mathieson BSC approached me to do the film when he was hired. I have known John since the mid-eighties, when he was an assistant cameraman, shortly before he worked with Gabriel Beristain on Caravaggio in 1986. I was fortunate to be working with one of the UK's primary 1st AC's, Simon Hume, who was assisted by his 2nd AC, Simon Dunn. Our excellent B camera operator was Rodrigo Gutierrez, his 1st AC Lewis Hume, 2nd AC Archie Müller, central loader Filippo Maso, and camera trainees Nick Poole and Nina Cavaciuti. After we rehearsed the scenes before shooting, John, Rod and I would discuss coverage and present our plan to Josie and Alex, our 1st Assistant Director. Josie gave us the freedom and trust to work in this manner, being very pragmatic in her approach-keen to understand and get a grasp on the conventions of coverage and the camera platforms we used to capture our images.



## Mary Queen of Scots

The main challenge we faced was the battle with time, specifically costume change times. We were inevitably at the mercy of costume changes from time to time. The costume department certainly put many hours in assuring we had minimum waiting times before the first shot of the day. The weather was remarkably kind to us on location in Scotland; one location on the Glenfeshie Estate was clouded over for an hour or two, and of course as soon as we moved the cloud cleared!

The DXL 1 was John's camera of choice, which was great news for Steadicam due to its being relatively light. We shot spherical and our lenses were Sphero 65's, Primo 70 Zooms and the Elite Zoom 150-520, which B Camera made great use of and their fine work appears extensively in the film. "

**Peter Cavaciuti**



**Jason Ewart**

"The best way to describe working on

## Hobbs and Shaw

is that it really was both Fast and Furious. It was a great experience operating for Director David Leitch and DP Jonathan Sella. They have done some incredible work together and I was a big fan of their previous films, especially their action and fight sequences. *Hobbs and Shaw* has a lot of these big complicated sequences and operating on these was very challenging, as the timing with the actors and camera movement had to be very precise. I was challenged daily and learnt a great deal.

Thanks must go to a fantastic camera and grip team who did a brilliant job and made the film a lot of fun to work on."

... Proudfoot  
... and the  
... allows:Part 2

... David Worley  
... girl with the  
... on Tattoo

... Robertson

... Karenina

... Peter Taylor

... Gravity

... Chris Haarhoff  
... rldman:  
... Unexpected  
... of Ignorance)

... Matt Sakamoto

... Revenant

2017  
... Cavaciuti  
... Allied

2018  
... Whelan  
... Darkest  
... Hour

## WINNER & CONGRATULATIONS JOE RUSSELL ACO TV OPERATOR AWARD

# KILLING EVE



**Killing Eve** has been a great show to be involved in from the very beginning, and has felt like a truly collaborative experience throughout all of the departments. From day one I feel like I was given a real chance to have a genuine input into how the show would shape-up from a visual and storytelling point of view, and lead DP Julian Court really seemed to appreciate what an operator could bring to the table once I earned his trust (It was the first time we'd worked together), and also how having someone exclusively dedicated to that role was a great benefit to him in terms of really giving him the focus required to juggle all the lighting complexities and forward-planning required if you're the DP of a fast-paced, tight-and-ever-changing-scheduled TV show!

Series 2 took the look of the first series and tried to expand and finesse it a little more. It was primarily a steadicam / studio mode shoot, with only a few handheld scenes scattered throughout when they seemed to suit. We would often use the Ronin as a remote head, either on a crane or just on the dolly, which proved a fantastic tool to have in the arsenal when you're inventing shots on the day that you maybe hadn't planned in advance! The crews I've worked with on all 3 series have been fantastic. Series 2 had Jules Ogden focus-pulling on the A cam, pulling off some incredible work more often than not with no rehearsals, and Craig Atkinson as Key Grip doing just the same, with Richard Bradbury stepping from A cam focus on series 1 to operating the B cam this time around, always searching for odd and interesting frames that would help keep the scenes alive in the edit. I feel very proud to be nominated for this award and to be considered alongside such a talented bunch of other operators, and to be able to go to work everyday and be surrounded and supported by such amazing crews is a real honour!

## Tv operator nominee John Beacham ACO

**"Carnival Row** once again brought me back to the beautiful city of Prague. Thanks to the talent of our Production Design team of Jiri Matura and François Séguin we were blessed with 'steampunkesque' visceral worlds everywhere we turned, making photography an absolute pleasure. With such great sets in the background, and a wonderful cast led by @caradelavingne and @orlandobloom in the foreground, it was always going to be hard to go too far wrong!! We were led through this process by our director Thor Freudenthal. His boundless energy and positivity is infectious, and very much reflected in the way he shoots. A long scene would be meticulously planned and choreographed in such a way that it would consist of 3 continuous shots with the in/out edit points built into the camera move. This left no room for error. The close-ups would develop from wides, and then perhaps a push into detail would be the cutting point for the next shot in the scene. Lighting such complicated moves was the unenviable task of DP @chris.seager3. As I write this, Chris is in LA having received an ASC nomination for his work on a later episode from the first season (good luck Chris!!). For me this was the ultimate treat for this episode. Just over 20 years ago Chris gave me my first break in the industry as trainee and continued to mentor me for many years. To have come full circle and now be operating A camera with him on this ep was a privilege. As always all the Czech crew were a joy. Thanks to our excellent 2nd unit DP Jakub Dvorsky, B Cam Op @ruzickad\_steadicam , 1st AC Dan Balzer, 2nd AC Jan Prokes and Key Grip Jan Rehanzl. Season 2 coming soon!!"



## TV Nominee Sean Savage ACO

"The journey that has been nine years long, several countries, hundreds of artists and even more locations. Thousands of undead... well you know the rest!! **Game of Thrones** with my wonderful camera and grip team has been one of the highlights of my career. The challenges have pushed me further than I thought possible. Simply the best experience ever. I feel very proud of the team that we've been nominated again for the Operators Award BSC/ACO/GBCT. Thank you. Sean Savage"





## TV Nominee Michael Carstensen ACO

"Sitting in a small office in Cape Town South Africa in front of a tiny doll called Ashley. How are we going to do this? How do we bring you to life? Stephan Pehrsson the DP, Anne Sewitsky the Director and I performed a little collaboration dance and we pulled off something amazing. Every day we had the opportunity to search for great frames and find symmetry in everything. It was fairly VFX intense - we would do multiple moves and passes on different types of dolls to get the correct movements of the Ashley Too Doll. We used the camera to create a character out of Ashley Too, tracking behind it with a low angle prism on a dolly scraping the floor to give it a presence in our world we were creating. We were blessed with great cast: the gorgeous Miley Cyrus, Marc Menchaca ( *The Ozarks* ), Angourie Rice ( *Spider-Man*) and Madison Davenport to name a few. **Black Mirror** is a wonderful series and I am honored to have been a part of it and to be part of the list of nominees.

## TV Nominee Tony Kay ACO

"**Beecham House**, directed by Gurinder Chadha, took me to Rajasthan, in northern India for three months in the autumn of 2018. What an adventure! We filmed in old forts, palaces, by lakes and in the mountains. There were many challenges, dealing with all the logistics of delivering and setting up equipment in our various locations, the heat of course and shooting on a tight TV schedule. That goes for all departments. Michael Ralph, the Production Designer and his team helped create an immersive pre-colonial India. Thankfully, aiding our small UK crew were all the amazing Indian team. Their hard work, dedication and good spirits helped shape "this time in glorious India as very special indeed. We mostly filmed with a combination of dolly and Steadicam, but our grips helped us achieve elegant shots with our packaged Panther Foxy crane, not to mention rigging remote heads to carriages, trucks and tuk tuks.



Thank you to DP Niels Riedtz Johansson for the opportunity and who transformed the harsh Indian sun into something most beautiful. Thanks also to a fantastic cast for all the support and good times. And a shout out to Ben Oliver, Bobby Sanivarapu, Siba Prasad, Abdul Malik, Ben Saffer, you are all true gents."

Charlie Rizek,  
John Biggles Higgins  
and Peter Cavaciuti  
collect the BSC  
Cinematography  
Award 2019 for  
Roger Deakins BSC |  
ASC for his stunning  
work on *1917*.





By now, unless you have been living under a rock, you will know about 1917 and the extraordinary way the film was perceived to be shown in one shot - a day in the life of two soldiers trying to get to the front line to stop a massacre in the first World War. Roger Deakins ASC | BSC photographed this movie and was awarded both the Oscar and Bafta amongst many other awards. Perhaps what makes the filming of the movie unique is the collaboration between Deakins, and camera operators Peter Cavaciuti and Charlie Rizek. If you haven't already, there is fantastic behind the scenes footage on YouTube that is 10 minutes in length. It's almost worth watching that prior to reading this article.

Could you detail the prep for the operation of this movie prior to even getting on set?

**ROGER :** My wife James and I started working on the film in the autumn of 2018. In September we went to Munich to see if Arri could supply us with three camera bodies of an Alexa Mini LF, which was a camera they were considering but had not begun work on at that time. Luckily they agreed to our request. Whilst we were in Munich, we looked at their Maxima and Trinity rigs. As Sam and I were considering what we wanted the camera to do, James and I were working, with Peter Cavacuti at Arri UK, to test all the available options regarding stabilized camera systems. We met Charlie Rizek at that time, as he was demonstrating the Trinity for us. In the spring of 2019 we rehearsed all the scenes with our two main actors and I shot these rehearsals with a little point and shoot camera. By the end of that rehearsal we had settled on the concept of our 'shot', so then we began to finesse our equipment needs to be able to shoot it. We settled on three primary systems; a remote head called a Stabileye (which was invented by David Freeth), Steadicam and the Arri Trinity.

Then we approached Charlie Rizek to work on the film as our Trinity operator. In February and March of 2019 we began extensive tests with our chosen items of equipment, often rehearsing individual shots with our two main actors.



In late February, when he returned to us from another shoot, Peter Cavacuti worked on manufacturing a gyro stabilized post on which we could mount the Stabileye remote head. We had a particular problem working at speed in the trenches but this rig allowed Peter to move at speed in front of the actors without worrying about the framing. He concentrated on keeping a correct distance between himself and the actors, whilst I was remotely operating the framing.

**PETER:** I met up with Roger and James in the Autumn of 2019 when they asked me to come on board for 1917. It was clear from the outset that the film would be very physically demanding for the Camera Operators, so I immediately started with more physical training than I normally do, which I kept up throughout prep and whilst I worked on *Last Christmas*, which was either side of the Christmas and New Year of 2018.



While I was in prep and shooting on *1917*, Gary Hymns (our Key Grip) is a keen runner, so I often went out for a run with Gary of an evening on location and did my normal gym sessions. We tested combinations of mounting the Stabileye on the Steadicam System, on the sled, direct to the arm, on an Easy-rig, and hand holding the Stabileye. By far the best method of mounting the Stabileye on the Sled was with Stabileye's 'Vibration Isolator' sandwiched between the Stabileye Head and the top of the Steadicam. We also tested other systems but the Stabileye, Steadicam, Stabileye on Steadicam and Trinity combinations were the most suited to the demands of the film, along with a Libra Head & the Mini Libra on an Electric Motorcycle. Charlie Rizek also worked tirelessly on researching many camera platform combinations, and with Arri and Chris Edwards of Optical Support's help.

Arri were able to extend the operating range of the Trinity Wheels which operated the tilt on the Trinity. Dave Freeth of Stabileye also had to adapt the Stabileye to work over the considerable distances we had to work with.

**CHARLIE:** I met Roger and James for the first time at Arri UK where I was demonstrating the Trinity rig - a few test days later I was offered to come on board. To say it was a pleasant surprise is an understatement! I almost fainted! The opportunity to work with Roger, the one-shot concept... I was ready to dive in no matter how deep the water was. Early on I became aware of the physical challenge and how demanding the shots were going to be. I jumped on the treadmill and doubled my regular workout routine. Physical conditioning would play a major part in the ability to perform. The difficulty of the one-shot workflow, long multiple takes where there's no holding back on any take! You have got to give all you have every attempt and hope to not run out of gas before the shot is achieved.



During testing it became apparent that to fully utilise the Trinity rig, the best approach was to have the tilt operated remotely by wheels. This method offered greater precision over the onboard joystick. The hybrid design of the Arri Trinity system where its based on a steadicam sled with a 2 axis stabilised remote head mounted on the top. This combination allows the rig to be operated more like a mini jib arm with 7ft of booming range. You're able to place the camera low to the ground or up over head height swiftly. The 2 axis tilt & roll stabilised head could be operated remotely. For the scenes where the trinity was most suitable, the camera frequently changed height, requiring constant tilt adjustment. With Roger on the wheels, I was able to concentrate on camera placement hitting marks and keeping up with the actors. The wheel control was essential to perform the Trinity shots. We had to find a solution to extend the operating range. During prep, James approached Arri Munich to find a solution. It wasn't a straight-forward task!





The Trinity uses a 2.4ghz radio module which requires a Line of sight connectivity. Together with Arri, Foma systems and Optical Support, a new long range radio module was made along with LR Coax antennas mounted externally through the Trinity Head to extend the signal. The system ended up working extremely well throughout the shoot, without a hiccup. The plane crash scene was a challenging shot to pull off. The scene unfolds in the farm yard - a relatively confined space. But every element of the shot- the duration, timing, complex acting with many moving elements at play, fire, gun shots, collapsing roof, blood rigs, props - all have to happen in a specific time. It was a highly choreographed scene where a one second delay meant its a reset going back to the start line.

So the longer we took to get through the take, the pressure would build up accordingly. The shot starts with Blake & Schofield lying flat on the ground after the plane crashes. They rush up towards the screaming pilot while the camera booms up from the ground, performs a push-in behind them, pans left and tracks sideways revealing the burning plane in the foreground. Through a predetermined gap in the plane tail with 1 inch to spare from each side, the camera hooks, panning 180 degrees while the German pilot who's on fire gets pulled from the burning cockpit. Through a narrow beam post, the camera pushes through at speed with a gradual boom down, while the pilot is dragged on the floor, until we land with a close up top shot over the pilot's face. A decisive tilt from Roger queued me to follow with a gentle pull back, opening to a two-shot. This is only the beginning of that shot!

The other challenge we had during this scene was the long lock-offs and slow push in moves. As luck would have it, we were faced with wind from the east, which made the camera especially hard to control in those delicate moves. With the expert help of Garry Hymns and the grip department, 2 sets of double wind deflectors came in and out during the shot! That took some elegant foot work hiding behind walls. The camera was constantly moving, 360 degrees looking in every direction. The scene was highly emotional. The performance from the actors was intense and required every fibre of concentration from all parties involved. There were a few tears shared during that one line. Or maybe it was that aggravating wind that kept me on my toes barely breathing at times, praying to the Gods of wind to give me a break.



By the end of the day we managed to get a few clean takes, which was an incredible team effort. The Trinity was the right tool for the shot. Having the ability to place the camera in any height with no restriction was essential to get the coverage Roger had planned for the scene. We used the Trinity for the entire sequence leading Schofield & Captain Smith to the truck convoy.



Can you talk us through the Stabileye on the Steadicam on set?

**ROGER:** As I say, there was the Stabileye, which was used on over 50% of the film, whether hand held, on a Technocrane, a wire system, or on Peter's custom made post rig, the Trinity and the Steadicam. We also used a Mini Libra head and a drone.

**PETER:** Chris Edwards of Optical Support and I talked about the need for a compact trench friendly rig, we decided a monitor could be placed on the Steadicam Gimbal Handle, like the Trinity Rig, so we could do away with the normal monitor assembly and the standard battery system on a Steadicam, thus making a much more compact rig which was less likely to be impeded by set and actor proximity. Chris developed the Dragonfly Steadicam Sled, which had the capability of mounting Gyroscopes and has a more compact battery mounting assembly. Roger and James's descriptions of the shots and the environment they would take place in made it clear that some of the trenches were extremely narrow and our two protagonists would be moving at speed towards the camera and away from it at times,

with supporting artists passing the camera from in front and behind. The Sauchiehall Trench fed into the Comms Down Trench for example, which was little more than 2'6" wide at shoulder height and tapered to approximately 18" at foot level. And the trench was populated with passing soldiers. It became clear to me that a great deal of my attention would be taken up by just negotiating the path along the very narrow, winding trenches, avoiding collisions with the trench itself and its occupants. On a few shots we would be running behind the actors and at an agreed point, pass in front of them in a continuous take. Peter Robertson and I had 'played' with Dave Freeth's Stabileye on Steadicam while we were shooting on *Now You See Me 2*, and were impressed by the results, but I had to wait for *1917* to thoroughly test it on Steadicam. Putting 'Stabileye' (a very sophisticated Gimbal Head) on Steadicam seemed to be a good solution to the narrow trenches challenge. Roger could operate the Stabileye whilst I negotiated myself and the rig along

through the trenches, running forwards whilst pointing backwards at speed worked very well. I had to have the camera well tucked over my shoulder, to avoid my shoulder coming into shot. Inevitably the rig or myself did collide with the trench or background soldiers on occasions since the 'Down' trench was so narrow, but the Stabileye Steadicam Combo worked very well. The Stabileye/Steadicam Combo also worked very well in the Front Line Trench. There were many SFX explosions that I had to deal with which would normally be much more of an issue, due to my vision being hampered by the falling dust and debris from the explosions. I also had to navigate around a lot of chalk rubble on the trench floor. But having the Stabileye on the Dragonfly meant I could concentrate on my path and timings with the action and dialogue, also not having to concern myself about refined stability since the Stabileye takes care of that whilst Roger took care of the operating. This was also particularly relevant in previous scenes in the Front Line Holding Pen where Schofield brandishes the letter to Lieutenant Hutton. The pen was packed with soldiers and I had to do a 360 degree move in the pen, negotiating a



hard undulating chalk floor packed with soldiers. I could concentrate on my timing with the dialogue, camera height and position, whilst avoiding human and physical obstacles, going from pointing forwards into the Holding Pen, and ending up pointing backwards over my shoulder on exiting the Holding Pen as Schofield ran toward me, then on a corner pivoting around to follow him down a trench to his meeting with a shell shocked and terrified Captain Ivins. Operating the Stabileye on the Steadicam was also a real challenge for Roger as there were considerable changes of direction and speed which required a lot of intuition on Roger's part on the Stabileye wheels system.

**How did you achieve the shot in the bunker with the explosion? What did you use ?**

**ROGER :** The German Bunker sequence was mainly shot by Pete and on Steadicam. However, there is a section during the explosion where the camera had to get close to the ground so, for this, Charlie worked with the Trinity. The dust was not a problem for the equipment but it left its mark on Pete! I can see him now as he was after every take! And on one take he and the camera were wiped out by some falling debris. His work was truly amazing and how he managed to watch the frame whilst staying upright, only he knows.

**PETER:** I remember discussing with Roger a few takes in how difficult the collapsing German Bunker was to operate. Frankly it was almost impossible, really! I have never had so much debris and dust to deal with and I mean never. It was dropped on me , in front of me and behind me. It was everywhere! I had my normal Steadicam Rig with the Volt Stabiliser. I asked Ryan Taggart (our rigging 1st AC) and Guido Cavaciuti (our 2nd AC) to give

Production a heads up that the whole rig and Camera would need to be stripped and cleaned by Optical Support and Arri respectively the next day. Of course we bagged as much of the rig and camera as we could but inevitably dust got in. Fortunately nothing stopped working though. At one point towards the end of the shot, I had to do a 180 degree pan from walking backwards to pointing forwards, following Blake and Schofield before they exit the bunker. On the pan and follow, a lot of debris was dropped and I was completely blinded and disorientated. I had no idea where the sides of the walls were.

I was relying on Gary Hymns to get me through that section of the bunker. In fact, without Gary spotting me, the shot would not have been achievable. I think the Steadicam was certainly the best tool for this particular shot as it was able to survive the battering it received, even though it had to be sent for a deep clean along with the LF.





We used regular Steadicam for example on the interior/ exterior shot of the Farmhouse, up until the pan to the aircraft dogfight. I had a knee popping boom down and squat to reveal Blake exiting the rear of the house before I boomed up and panned to the dogfight. We had gone from Trinity with Charlie up to the Orchard, then to Stabileye with Gary and myself through the orchard, then to Steadicam, as I mentioned int/ext on the farm house, back to Stabileye for the plane crash and then back to Trinity and Charlie for Blake's confrontation with the pilot. We also used regular Steadicam on Schofield's meeting with Colonel Mackenzie in his dugout where the letter is finally delivered. I must say Ryan and Guido were there for every second of every shot, through thick and thin, rain or hail. No matter what the camera platform was, they were both fantastic & Andy Harris (our senior 1st AC) did not miss a beat on focus. Andy is a great team player and close friend.

### How and when did you decide on shot breaks and did you ever give up on a shot?

**ROGER:** The shot breaks were primarily to change location, for performance or to change a camera rig. The camera rigs had to be swapped at certain moments so this meant we had to make a break, but this was less of a factor than breaking for performance.

We had rehearsed and rehearsed, so by the time we came to the shoot, we were well prepared. There was only one occasion when I would have liked to wait for better light, but that was a schedule issue and we had no control over the weather. The shot was as good as we could make it otherwise.



### Can you talk us through the practicalities of a shot? Video village / sound / line of site for the wheels - How was this achieved?

**ROGER:** The problem with transmission was only solved in the last few weeks of prep. We had two mobile vans, which housed the remote controls. Josh Gollish (our DIT) and Andy Harris pulled focus on the entire 'shot'. We always centered these vans between the beginning and the end of a shot but, even then the distances for the transmitters was considerable. Give the added issue of the camera at times being in a 7' trench, you can see the issues we had to solve. My wife, James, who always works alongside me, was wearing a headset and always in contact with the grips, Peter or Charlie, depending on who was with the camera. I operated the remote head and the third axis of the Trinity, the tilt, and either I or Josh was pulling stop.

image c/o & Thanks to  
François Duhamel



# WOMEN BEHIND THE CAMERA



Hello - I am **Zoe Goodwin-Staurt ACO** and most recently I have been lucky enough to be B Camera on Netflix's new production *The One*, working alongside Directors of Photography Ruairí O'Brien ISC and Dan Atherton. As well as Directors Catherine Moreshead and Brady Hood respectively. It was an extremely successful and enjoyable shoot filming in London, Gower Peninsula and South Wales. We shot on the Arri Mini LF with Zeiss Master Anamorphics. This combination of camera and glass created a great look and feel to the project and made finding interesting and dramatic shots even more fun and dynamic. It's the first shoot where I've used the Mini LF and I can genuinely say I really liked it. Purely from an operating perspective they really have understood the ergonomics of the operator and the camera. An enhanced viewfinder with much better image quality, longer extension cables, more flexibility is a real asset. Not to mention the new heated eyepiece!

Our days were always varied and even though I wasn't on the entirety of the shoot, I still was involved in a wide range of the filming. Most of my work was handheld, although, as with most jobs, that could change on a scene by scene basis. There was dolly work, remote heads, tracking vehicles, cranes and even a moment as an in-vision Camera Operator. One of the highlights for me though, was when I was asked to step up to DoP a few scenes on the 2nd Unit. It was a real thrill and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I was fully supported by production and the crew, and Gaffer Gary Chaisty was brilliant. Being on a set where you feel like you can push yourself and achieve new things is one of the best experiences you can have. The set of *The One* was one of those places. I learnt a lot, met some fantastic new people, made new friends and contributed to what I hope will be a great new drama.

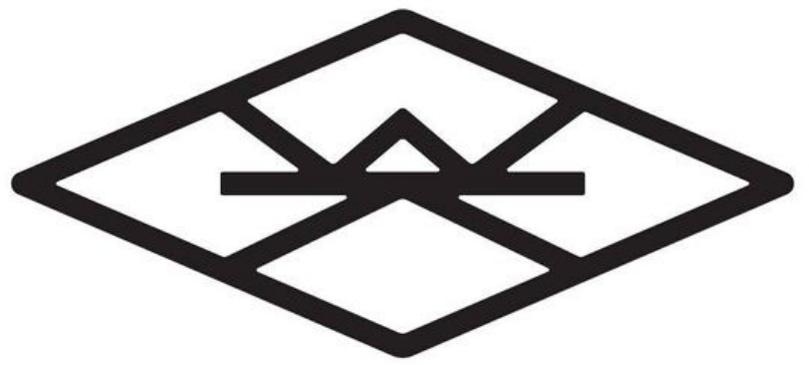
<https://womenbehindthecamera.co.uk>

After an enjoyable BSC Expo, where I partook in the 1-2-1 Primetime Pledges, I met some empowering



people who offered me great advice and hopefully with whom I might get to work with later on in the year. The support from members of the ACO, Women Behind the Camera and Optical Support was integral to me making my decision to sign up for a Tiffen Steadicam course in March which I am extremely excited about. I can't wait to use a totally different tool and language as a way of telling.

## New Patron for the ACO



**WALTER KLASSEN**

"The Klassen Slingshot is the most effective and liberating camera operating tool I've come across in two decades. Its simplicity, robustness and versatility of design allows me to achieve handheld-looking shots at any camera height, for any duration, with a fraction of the physical duress of traditional handheld. Over the past three years, it has become my secret weapon against bulky large-format cameras, long takes, and today's aggressive, improvisational filmmaking styles. If I can DESIGN the shot with a director's finder or i-phone, I can EXECUTE it identically with a 40 lb. camera - thanks to my Slingshot. The added benefit of attaching a gimbal is a great companion when the steadicam or technocrane don't fit the bill. I've been using the Klassen Flex vest with my steadicam for nearly a decade - and the ability to mount the slingshot onto the same vest (in less than a minute) is fantastic. The Slingshot has added immense flexibility and creativity to my camera work, as well as years of longevity to my career. I simply won't go anywhere without it. Period."

*by Geoffrey Haley*



**NEW ACO PATRON**

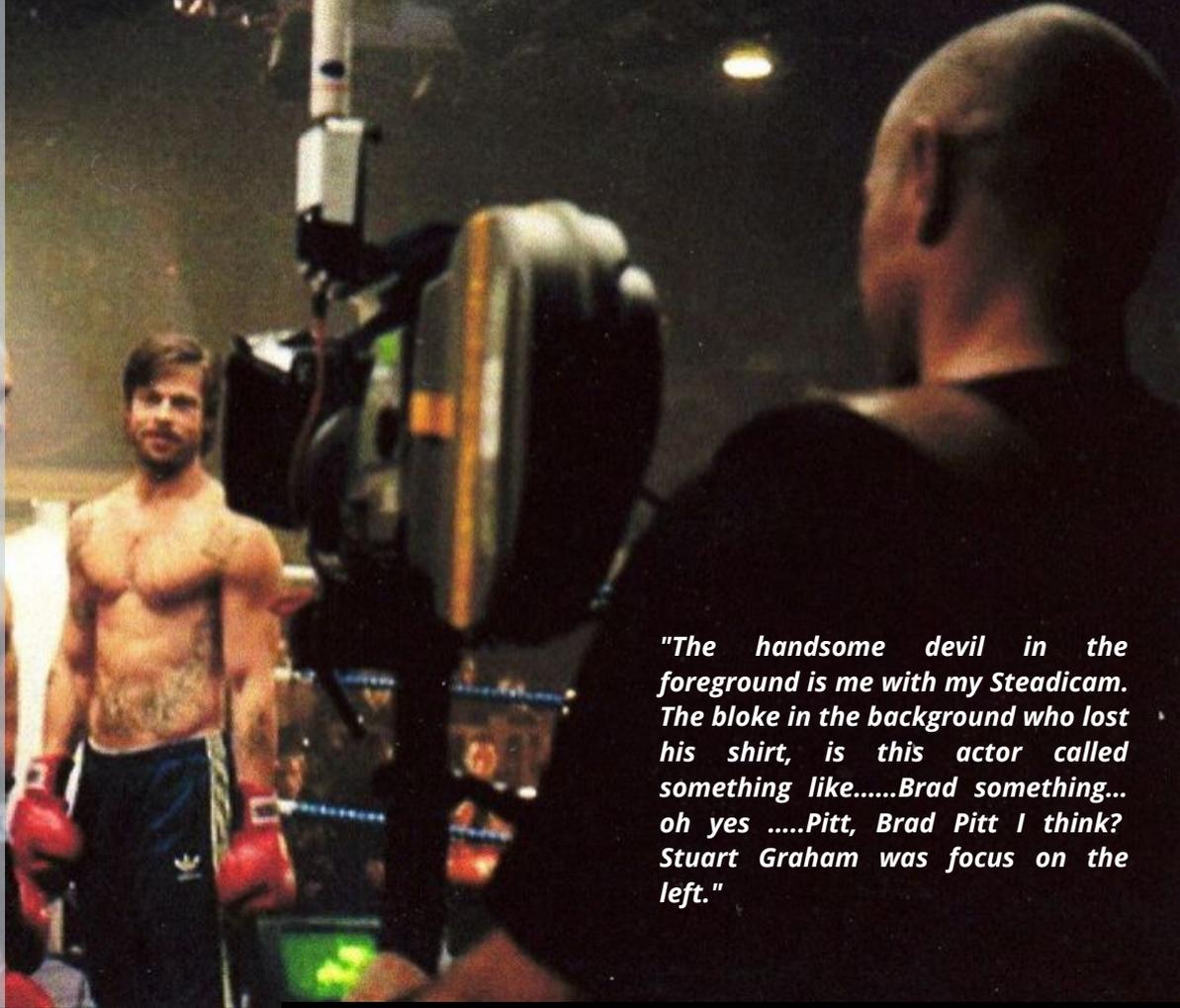
Dear Members

We are delighted to announce that VMI.TV.LTD has pledged its support of the ACO and is now a new patron of our Association. VMI is a camera, grip and lighting company based in London and Bristol. They are at the forefront of the digital revolution and can offer solutions for all types of shooting and budgets.

Ian Jackson, commercial director, announced that "VMI is very proud to become a patron of the ACO as pointing a camera at things is our heritage".

We are extremely pleased to have VMI.TV.LTD on board and look forward to growing relations over the years.

A new addition to *In the Frame* is the 'Throwback' section, where ACO operators talk about work on past movies and TV shows. First up is Peter Wignall ACO talking about one of Guy Ritchie's smash hit films, *Snatch*. Think about it. 1999. Height of Brit pop, solar eclipse, no Brexit on the horizon, and sound tracks on movies were becoming super cool - 35mm, Brad Pitt and TFI still smashing it up on Friday nights.



"The handsome devil in the foreground is me with my Steadicam. The bloke in the background who lost his shirt, is this actor called something like.....Brad something... oh yes .....Pitt, Brad Pitt I think? Stuart Graham was focus on the left."



\*\*\*\*\*

**SNATCH**

## Peter Wignall ACO: Throws Back

**We filmed** *Snatch* in 1999. It was a single camera shoot over 6 weeks. 12 hour days, 6 day weeks. Tough schedule but that was the norm for that type of film back then.

**We shot** all over London with no studio work. Unfortunately most of those locations have gone. One's a cross rail station in Old street. That was our first day under the arches with Jason Statham and Stephen Graham walking through with me on Steadicam. Stephen showing Jason a gun he had acquired and Jason asking him " What's that for Tommy? Is that for zee Germans?"

**Guy's dialogue** is always fantastic!! *Snatch* was shot 35mm with a 1:185 ratio. We used Moviecama compact and an SL for Steadicam. Lenses were Ziess super speeds. We used the high speed film Photo-sonic camera for the Brad Pitt fight sequence. The one that sounds like a jet engine taking off next to your ear!! It was great that Guy Ritchie and DP Tim Maurice Jones BSC love movement, so we kept the camera moving whenever possible and taking pity on me, not using as much Steadicam as *Lock Stock*, but letting me sit on the dolly with a cup of coffee in hand. Very important when doing 12 hour days!! Along with that, the style we developed further from *Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, was a slightly comic book wide angle dutch look with still a "performance", "*Get Carter*" feel. The colour palette was carefully chosen with a sheen wash on the walls. We also found a zoom really fitted the style from films like *Bullitt*.

**A prime** example was a scene we shot in a quirky wide angle frame that **(to the right)** was born out of necessity because we ran out of time at the end of the day. We used a 9mm lens and the camera was 90 degrees dutched and the cast were great in positioning themselves perfectly. Silly, but that's one of my favourite frames I've ever done.....**very graphic**. Something that we used again from *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* and refined, was Steadicam speed ramps in the opening sequence robbery in the jewellers. They were post ramps and unlike *Lock Stock*, they were planned. If you look closely, Tim (DOP), Simon (Sound Mixer), and Dave (1st) all got a part in it.....me on the other hand had to stay behind the camera!! Sometimes life is just not fair. I suit black and my life could be so different. Perhaps even an Oscar?



We were also lucky to be given time to storyboard, prep lots of the more complicated sequences.

I went to art school and can draw, so Tim, Guy and I worked on ideas well before we started filming.

This was one of them. It went on to introducing the cast in a series of "wipe through to the next" which was all done in different locations, different days and couldn't have been made up on the day. Turned into an iconic look.



**Another example** is a scene at one of the boxing matches where Jason is telling Brad not to knock out his opponent and go down in the 5th. We shot at 48 FPS and Jason lip-synced to pre-recorded dialogue played at double speed. The end result was Jason speaking normally but moving in slow motion.



**Er ok,** I admit that technique was used in music videos quite a bit at the time. Didn't say it was original. just perhaps one of the first in a movie... Well definitely in a Guy Richie movie with me operating!



**Forget about** being deafened as a machine gunner in the First World War.....

Operate a 2500 frame Photo-Sonic camera.....pardon? What was that? **Turn over?**



**Me in a** strange choice of head wear next to Benicio Del Toro. Guy in the background having a very Satisfying scratch.

# AESTHETICA SHORT FILM FESTIVAL



Last November the ACO returned once again to the Aesthetica Short Film Festival in York to stage another Masterclass for the sixth year running, entitled "Capturing the Moment, The Craft of The Camera Operator". The ACO were kindly represented by David Worley, Torquil Fleming-Boyd and Vince McGahon, who were interviewed by our

resident host, Mark Carey, Senior Lecturer in Cinematography at The Northern Film School. The Masterclass this year was held at St John's University and as in previous years, we were thrilled to discover that a very enthusiastic audience had come to listen to our panel discussion.

The session started with a 10-minute showreel which contained clips from *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, *The Guvnors* and *Stan & Ollie* - all work shot by our intrepid ACO panel. The audience were fully engaged, as the panel talked about how they work with both the Director and Director of Photography, to block and construct a scene and then implement this plan using their detailed knowledge of lenses, angles, movement and many other skills. The session flew by, as discussions about styles, techniques, the use of Steadicam, Handheld, Dolly and Cranes all came into play.

The audience certainly began to understand the complexities of what an Operator has to handle on a daily basis and the importance of the role. We should all be proud that the ACO is being invited to these festivals and the respect that we are given whenever we attend. Similarly to previous years, we know all the operators involved, thoroughly enjoyed the experience and loved meeting the people who came to listen to the ACO. I am sure the ACO will be invited back again in 2020, so please if you are around on November 7th, please get on board and represent your organisation. The ASFF pay for First Class rail travel and a Hotel Room if you require one, whilst the ACO will pay a daily per-diem. So what's not to like? The ACO would like to thank our three wonderful speakers for giving up their time and representing the ACO, Mark Carey for his very kind and generous good nature, and of course most importantly, Aesthetica for inviting us to the Festival.

Philip Sindall ACO



# WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

# CUT IT.

CREW-LED ACTION FOR THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY. JOIN US.

[www.cutit.org.uk](http://www.cutit.org.uk)

A grassroots organisation formed of working crew in the film and tv industry who want to tackle the climate emergency head on. You also have a voice! Join them

<http://www.cutit.org.uk>

"We specially adapted and designed the Dragonfly rig for the highly successful release of 1917. The idea behind the design was to keep the rig as small and compact as possible to make it easy for the operator to run through the trenches.

By using a small footprint this allowed the Dragonfly to be close to the operator. This idea of a compact profile rig incorporated with the use of the Volt and Gyro combination made for one of the most accurate Steadicam systems currently in use.

Why is it called the Dragonfly? The Dragonfly is one of the world's lightest, fastest and quickest insects. All of these match the design of the Dragonfly Steadicam which allowed for full fast-paced running of Peter Cavaciuti through the narrow trenches and the battlefields sets of 1917."

Chris Edwards

image c/o  
François Duhamel



# OPTICAL SUPPORT

**Paul Donachie**  
in America on *Better Call Saul*

**Ciaran Barry** I am currently working as a Camera Operator on *Foundation* Ep 102 and will then be working as one of the camera operators on *The Last Duel* in the middle of March. **Marc Benoiel** is working on a few commercials and should start a feature film in Ireland with Irish director Michael Kinirons and Cinematographer Suzie Lavelle BSC ISC in late spring. **Richard Bradbury** is currently working on *Tailspin*, for Keshet Productions & Apple TV+, as B Camera Operator.

# Whose operating on **WHAT?**

## Sarah Princestone

**Peter Robertson ASSOC. BSC/ ACO** Camera and Steadicam Operator is still shooting A camera and Steadicam on *The Nevers*, a 10 part sci-fi series for HBO, with director Joss Whedon and DP Seamus McGarvey BSC, ASC. The cast includes Elizabeth Berrington, Ben Chaplin and Nick Frost. **Simon Baker ACO** Camera and Steadicam Operator is finishing shooting A camera and steadicam on *The Crown* season 4 with directors Paul Whittington and Ben Caron, and DP Adriano Goldman ASC, ABC on location in England and Scotland. The cast includes Olivia Coleman, Tobias Menzies and Helena Bonham Carter. **Sean Savage ASSOC. BSC/ ACO** Camera and Steadicam operator is filming A camera on *Pennyworth II* with director Danny Cannon and DP Mark Patten. The cast includes Jack Bannon and Paloma Faith. They are filming at Leavesden studios and London locations. **James Layton ACO** Camera and Steadicam Operator is finishing filming A camera and 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, having wrapped on the final block of the acclaimed thriller series *Killing Eve 3*, is now shooting A camera and steadicam on block 1 of *Tailspin* for Apple TV+. It is an English language adaptation of the Israeli series *False Flag*. The DP is Neville Kidd ASC and the director is Chris Long. They are filming on location around London and Oxfordshire using Alexa Studio LF and Mini LF with Zeiss Supreme Primes.

**Peter Wignall ACO** Camera and Steadicam Operator is filming B camera and steadicam on *Foundation*, a sci-fi series for Skydance Television and Apple TV+ based on Isaac Asimov's book series of the same name. The cast includes Jared Harris, Lee Pace and Laura Birn. **Tony Kay ACO / GBCT** Camera and Steadicam Operator has recently finished filming A camera and steadicam on *Cursed*, a fantasy series for Netflix, with DP Balazs Bolygo BSC and director Sarah O'Gorman. Tony has also been shooting dailies on *Killing Eve 3*. **Dan Nightingale ACO** Camera and Steadicam Operator is finishing shooting A camera and steadicam on Russell T. Davis' new show *Boys* with DP David Katznelson DFF, BSC and Director Peter Hoar for Red Production and Channel 4. **Tony Jackson ASSOC. BSC | ACO** Camera and Steadicam has been shooting pickups for *A Discovery of Witches* series 2. **Fabrizio Sciarra ACO** is currently filming A camera and steadicam on a reshoot of a feature film *Horizon Line* with director Sam Donovan and DP Flavio Martinez Labiano. **Matt Fisher ACO** Camera, Steadicam and AR Operator who has recently joined PrinceStone has been filming dailies on *Bridgerton*.



James Burgess is on 'Two weeks to live.'

## Arri Crew

**Pete Batten** has been joining *The Nevers* for dailies with Main Unit and the 2nd Unit. **Jason Ewart** is currently operating A camera and Steadicam on *The Batman* for DP Greig Fraser. **Chris Plevin** has just finished *Cash Truck* for Guy Ritchie with Alan Stewart as DP and is now about to prep for *The Northman* in Belfast and Iceland with Jarin Blaschke DoP and Robert Eggers directing. **Matt Poynter** has just finished 6 months of A Camera and Steadicam on *His Dark Materials 2* and currently on dailies on *The Duke*, with Mike Eley BSC.

## Wendy Scheider Entertainment

**Peter Cavaciuti** - Just wrapped *Project Icon* with Cinematographer John Mathieson and Director Roland Joffè. **Andrew Fletcher** - Currently working on Marvel Series *Loki* in Atlanta, GA. **Mike Heathcote** - Just wrapped *Respect* with Cinematographer Kramer Morgenthau for MGM. **Chris McGuire** is currently working on *Suicide Squad 2* with Cinematographer Henry Braham and Director James Gunn. **Derek Walker** last worked on *The Princess Switch, Switched Again*, as A Camera / Steadicam for Netflix.

## Reel Angels

Associate ACO members **Agnieszka 'Aga' Szeliga** operated B camera for DP Mike Eley BSC, on Netflix's new feature *The Dig*, starring Carey Mulligan and Ralph Fiennes. **Svetlana Miko** shared the job with Agnieszka on the last week of the production. Svetlana and Agnieszka were also both additional camera operators for DP Ben Davis BSC, on Marvel's *Eternals*, starring Angelina Jolie and Richard Madden. Recently Agnieszka and Svetlana were working alongside DP Greig Fraser in the main unit, as additional camera as well as B Camera SPLINTER Unit, on *The Batman* movie starring Robert Pattinson.



Thomas Williams on Life



Ossie McLean finished operating on *Bond 25, No Time to Die* before Christmas with DoP Linus Sandgren, and is now starting *Cinderella* with DoP Andrew

## Individuals

**Michael Carstensen** is currently the A camera Operator on *The Wheel of Time*, a Sony Pictures / Amazon Studios TV show that is a fantasy genre

based on the books of Robert Jordan. **Ed Clark** has been working on *Intergalactic* since September, a Sky 1 show being made by Tiger Aspect and Moonage. His role is A camera and Steadicam operator. **Dan Edwards** is currently working as principle operator and a Steadicam on a New Netflix Drama called *Zero Chill* with DP Phil Wood. The show is primarily shot on ice, with lots of Steadicam on ice. The show follows the fortunes of an ice hockey team and an ice dancing team forced to share the same rink. **John Ferguson** is currently working as B Cam/ Steadicam Operator on *Operation Mincemeat*, shooting in the UK and Spain with DP Sebastian Blenkov and directed by John Madden.

**Peter Field** is about to join *Midas* as main unit DP. It's an action/thriller feature film from Dignus Films starring Sean Cameron Michael. The film shoots locations in London, Scotland, Home Counties, Holy Island and Cape Town. **Simon Finney** is currently working on *The Crown* Series 4 as A camera for DP Ben Wilson on blocks 7, 9 and 10. **Martin Foley** is the A camera operator on *Unforgotten 4* with Director Andy Wilson and DP Soren Bay. They finish in late April. **James Frater** has been operating *The Witcher* season 2 as A camera/ Steadicam operator. **Chris Hutchinson** is presently working on a Netflix production called *The Irregulars* as A Cam/Steadicam. **Zoe Goodwin-Stuart** has just finished shooting *The One* for Netflix with Ruairi O'Brien ISC and next she is doing the Tiffen Silver Steadicam Course.

**Simon Jayes** is currently working on *Star Wars: The Mandalorian* as A Camera / Steadicam Operator. **Steve Krasznai** is currently in Vancouver shooting a series for the streaming platform Hulu called *Marvel's Helstrom*. **Adam Mendry** is on Feature film *Letters to M.4* and has been working as Steadicam operator. **Darren Miller's** work mostly involves aerial filming with drones, specialising in high end drama, features and commercials. Recent work includes *The Kings Man, The Crown, Rebecca* and *Dracula*. **David Morgan** is currently working on *Foundation* in Limerick as A Camera/Steadicam. **Peter Rosenfeld** ACO SOC working as A camera operator on feature film *Free Guy*. **Jonathan Tyler** is currently on season 2 on the Netflix Crime Drama *Criminal*.

## Richard Philpott on Project Icon



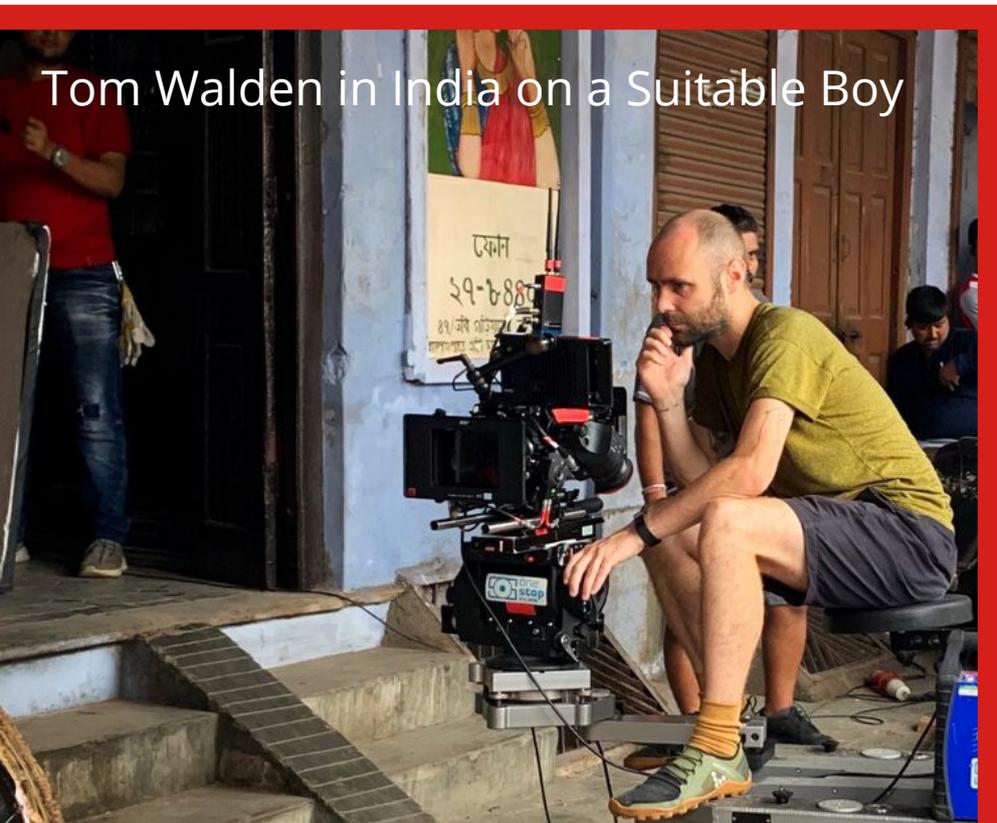
**Des Whelan** has just finished on a picture for Paramount called *Without Remorse* with DP Philippe Rousselot, shooting in Berlin and Washington DC. **Tom Wilkinson** is currently in Budapest operating on *Birds Of Paradise*, an Amazon Studios film with Shaheen Seth DP and Sarah Adina Smith Directing. Set in Paris, it is a coming-of-age drama about ballet dancers competing for the top prize at the Paris School of Ballet.

## Sara Putt

**Andrei Austin ACO, Associate BSC, SOC** has wrapped on Director Sir Kenneth Branagh's *Death on the Nile*, where he was B Camera/Steadicam Operator. **Jon Beacham ACO** has recently been nominated for an Operators Award in the TV Category for his brilliant work on series 1 of *Carnival Row*. Jon has returned to Operate on the second series where he is currently on location in Croatia. **Danny Bishop ACO, Associates BSC, SOC** has wrapped on *Your Honour* in America, working with DP John Lindley ASC. **Ed Clark ACO**, as Camera/Steadicam Operator, continues working in Manchester on the sci-fi series *Intergalactic* for Tiger Aspect/Moonage Pictures. The series is set 200 years in the future and is about a group of rogue female criminals. **James Frater** is new to the Sara Putt Associates family. James is soon to start on the second series of *The Witcher* for Netflix as Camera/Steadicam Operator. *The Witcher* stars Henry Cavill as Geralt of Riva.

**Ilana Garrard ACO** will soon start prepping as B Camera/Steadicam Operator on Working Title's Feature *The Swimmers* with DP Chris Ross. **James Leigh ACO** has recently finished on *Roadkill for The Forge* which starred Hugh Laurie. He will soon start prepping for *The Offenders*, where he will operate B Camera/Steadicam for DP Nick Martin. **Vince McGahon ACO, Associate BSC** is currently working on *Venom II*, which stars Tom Hardy and is Directed by Andy Serkis. **Julian Morson ACO, Associate BSC** has recently wrapped on Marvel's *The Eternals*, which starred Angelina Jolie, Salma Hayek and is currently working with main unit on *The Batman*. **Alastair Rae ACO, Associate BSC** has returned from Australia and India where he was on location working with DP Anthony Dod Mantle on a series called *The Bear*, which stars Charlie Hunnam and is based on a book entitled *Shantaram*, a novel by Gregory David Roberts

## Tom Walden in India on a Suitable Boy



# Magnificent 8

8 Questions to Daniel Nightingale ACO

Dracula



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

**My route** into the camera department and to the position of operator was fairly conventional in many respects. I had studied photography and after finishing, got a job as a projectionist at a chain cinema. Watching reel after reel, night after night drove me to shoot my own short film and in doing so I met some camera crew from the industry. They later suggested me for a camera trainee role on a TV drama with a fantastic DP Pete Sinclair and his crew; Andy Banwell and Glenn Coulman. Still one of my favourite ever experiences at work. From there I climbed the ladder, always shooting my own shorts (and somehow, three features!) at weekends and breaks. When the chance to step up came, I embraced it and can thank DP David Rom for my first big break as his B Cam' and Steadicam Op' on *Poldark*. An amazing job on the Cornish coast which confirmed for me I was indeed very privileged to sit behind the camera, a sentiment I think many of us share.

## 2) Describe the process of working on *Dracula* and your approach to the job.

**I worked on** two episodes of *Dracula*, both for talented DP Tony Slater Ling BSC and each held different challenges. I was B Camera Operator on Episode One, which for me was predominantly Steadicam. Director Jonny Campbell was very keen to employ Steadicam in the main stage (Dracula's castle interior) as much of Johnathan Harker's story involves him poking around and searching the Count's lair. I was constantly ducking low ceilings and scraping passageways to lead and/or follow actors, often using the Steadicam to discover plot points and then re-join action. We also had the talented Simon Wood on set with his MKV AR sled on two occasions, often in a duelling Steadicam setup. Simon also shot AR for castle exteriors in Slovenia on Episode One. Jonny and Tony both had clear ideas about what they wanted to achieve from the B Camera, including moving match-shots for transitions. This was quite a task on Steadicam, but these are the challenges we love coming to work for.

**Paul McGuigan** directed Episode 3 of the show and in a change of style and pace we found ourselves out on the road much more, with lots of exterior and night locations. We also were using cranes and in-camera trickery and Tony suggested I take over the A camera duties in order to allow him more time lighting and planning with his gaffer Paul Murphy. For me this was a welcome challenge, especially with some of the ambitious shots Paul had in mind and I relished the opportunity to get more involved with the narrative and overall style.

## 3) Introduce us to the *Dracula* Camera and Grip team

**Steve Smith 1st AC** and Amber Osborne are Tony's go-to camera team and were the driving force on the A camera, a very experienced, talented and organised pair. Mairead Albiston was focusing the B camera, and had



had only stepped up in the last year or so, I think she did an amazing job and was ably abetted by the ever reliable Mitch Payne as her loader. Our excellent trainees, the backbone of the department were; Maria Camilla Brazil, Ronan O' Loughlin and Elizabeth Owen. Oly Pillon was our talented DIT and on set BTS stills magician! Craig Atkinson was the Key Grip on the job and proved invaluable when it came to planning and executing some of the complex moves and builds that Paul and Jonny had dreamed up. His team included Stevie Peat on the B Camera and Kurt Fox keeping things ticking over on assisting duties. Darren Miller ACO and Angus Benson-Blair were our UK drone team, providing great work in difficult conditions. A challenging and exciting shoot to be a part of from start to finish, with excellent technical and creative crew on the floor.



#### **4) How did you come to work on *Dracula*?**

**I'd worked** with Tony on and off over the years but just last year he had asked me to do some Steadicam dailies for him on his most recent feature *Cordelia*, with Director Adrian Shergold. Thankfully it seems I did a good enough job to be asked back!

#### **5) What was the best advice given to you as an operator?**

**I always** remember Adam Gilham saying to me, "Let the grips do the hard work!". What he meant by this was to plan your shots, tracks, jibs etc in such a way that your camera movements are almost invisible. The theory being if you draw too much attention to the camera it can sometimes break the spell between the audience and the story. That's not to say everything must be beautiful and to reject awkward or uncomfortable frames, just to know why you're moving the camera and to make those moves as functional as

possible. That's why I think the grip is the Camera Operator's best ally on set.

**A good** grip in my opinion, is the difference between a good and adequate shot.

**For me** the dolly grip is like a 2nd operator. Timing and framing depend on their abilities, their deftness of touch on the jib, knowing when to adjust for that extra bit of shoulder. All this is only possible with good communication - a very important relationship for an operator.

**Tony Slater Ling BSC says..**

***"Working and collaborating with Daniel on a big project like Dracula was a God send. He was another creative element in the mix and took the pressure off me to concentrate on the large scale and sometimes complex lighting setups. His skill as an excellent operator and Steadicam Operator elevated the images and the show".***



## 6) What stands out most for you during your time on *Dracula*?

The scale of ambition across the whole show and in each department was such that it was hard not to be excited by the job. Amazing Production Design in Dracula's castle, old school animatronic creature rigs and monster prosthetics all added to the hard work we were doing in camera and lighting. However, one of the stand-out moments was the huge 60ft plus rear projection dream sequences we shot at Leavesden Studios, with Dracula and Sister Agatha. Skimming across gallons of fake blood on the Moviebird crane in and around the actors was a great challenge and a visual treat.



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

I'm probably not alone in the fact that 70's cinema really had the greatest influence on me. I've always been drawn to suspenseful thrillers which carry allegorical themes.

**Don't Look Now** (1973) DP'd by Anthony B. Richmond BSC, ASC the classic Burt Reynolds craziness in **Deliverance** (1972), DP'd by legendary Vilmos Zsigmond ASC and **Chinatown** (1974), photographed by John A Alonzo ASC with Nicholson's epic screen performance would be my mainstream stand outs. There was something about 1st or 2nd generation European influence in American cinema in that period which seems striking, risky and compelling - that style of filming I loved and influenced me.

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

Currently I'm working on *Boys* for Channel 4 and RED Productions. It's the latest creation from the mind of Russell T Davies and centres on the lives of a group of friends in the London gay community in the 80's. Its set and revolves around the height of the AIDS crisis. I'm shooting A Camera and Steadicam for DP David Katznelson BSC and director Peter Hoar. Steve Smith 1st AC and Amber Osborne 2nd AC are on my camera once again and Damian Roberts is our indispensable Key Grip.

It's one of those jobs where you feel privileged to be part of an important story, one that is largely unknown or perhaps forgotten by much of modern Britain. When you make this kind of show you're reminded of how crucial the arts are, even in the more mainstream sector of film and television, and how lucky we are as operators to be a part of that.

