

# HD PROGUIDE

From the Publisher of HDProGuide.com, the Professional Production Resource

2014, Vol. 2, No. 5 US\$5.95

## 30 HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS



PAGE 31



PAGE 32



PAGE 33

**ACTION SPORTS MOVIE MAKING**

PAGE 12

**LIVE PRODUCTION**

**PRODUCED USING BLACKMAGIC DESIGN**

PAGE 17

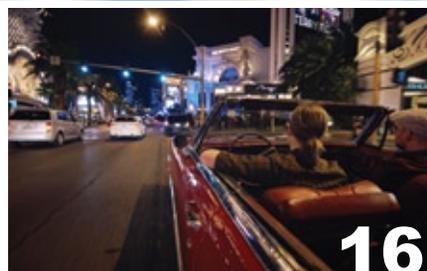
COLOR GRADING / POST PRODUCTION	<b>4</b>	<b>How to Build a Home Projection Color Suite</b>
DOCUMENTARY	<b>8</b>	<b>4K DSLR Revolution is Here, Part 2</b>
	<b>12</b>	<b>"Builder", Documentary</b> <i>Action-Sports Movie-Making</i>
TELEVISION	<b>16</b>	<b>Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Cameras and DaVinci Resolve</b> <i>Used on Esquire Network's "Brew Dogs"</i>
LIVE PRODUCTION	<b>17</b>	<b>Chinese Rocker Wang Feng's Concert at Beijing's Bird's Nest</b> <i>Produced Using Blackmagic Design</i>
AUDIO	<b>18</b>	<b>Shotgun Microphones</b> <i>Shure VP89 and VP82</i>
EDUCATION	<b>20</b>	<b>Vision Research Updates V-Series of 1 Megapixel Ultrahigh-Speed Digital Cameras</b> <i>Phantom v2011, v1611, v1211</i>
	<b>21</b>	<b>AFI Conservatory's Cinematography Discipline</b> <i>A Conversation with Stephen Lighthill, ASC and Tal Lazar</i>
HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS	<b>24</b>	<b>30 Holiday Gift Ideas</b> <i>For Filmmakers, Videographers and Crew</i>
CONTRIBUTORS	<b>35</b>	



**12**



**4**



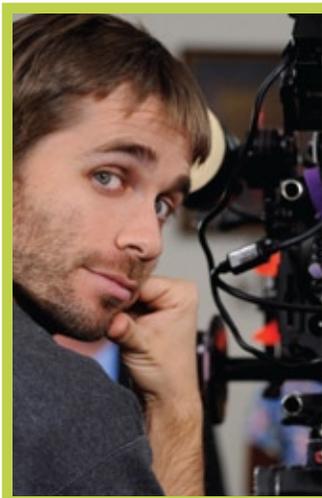
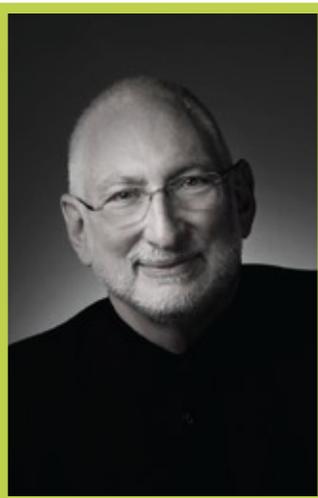
**16**



**18**

# AFI CONSERVATORY'S CINEMATOGRAPHY DISCIPLINE

*A Conversation with Stephen Lighthill, ASC and Tal Lazar*



HD Pro Guide Magazine talks with Stephen Lighthill, ASC, Senior Filmmaker-In-Residence and Tal Lazar, Lecturer and Alumnus (AFI Class of 2009) about AFI Conservatory's Cinematography discipline. Cinematography applications are open for Fall 2015. Apply at [AFI.edu](http://AFI.edu).

## WHAT IS YOUR TEACHING PHILOSOPHY?

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** In general, Cinematography at AFI uses discovery based instruction. We seek a dialogue in the classroom. Of course, the program is grounded in the philosophy of learning while doing and so Fellows spend time with curriculum and film production. The 'Art & Craft of Cinematography' course for example, taught by Tal Lazar covers a wide array of subjects, ranging from digital imaging technology, film exposure and optics to breaking down a script and deciding where a camera should be placed. There are other courses in the Cinematography discipline at the AFI Conservatory which address these subjects. There are two principal guidelines which help us decide how such a broad range of information should be addressed. The first is a 'practicality test,' which directs us in deciding what subject should be taught and how far deep into technology we actually go. For every lecture and slide we present, we ask how practical and useful this will be to the emerging cinematographer. At the same time we believe that a good artist needs to base his or her inspiration and technique on things that may not necessarily be immediately useful.

## ARE THERE DIFFERENCES IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND NEW WORKFLOWS

## THAT ARE IMPORTANT AT THIS TIME?

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** The incredible speed at which imaging technology is changing is something with which film schools, as well as industry professionals, never had to deal. It is becoming increasingly difficult to stay at the cutting edge of technology, and this needed ability is something that we address at the AFI Conservatory. While we use and teach the latest technologies available, we try to 'future proof' our Fellows by instilling abilities that will allow them to test and assess any new imaging technology out there. The bottom line is that images are still a common 'language' that we use, regardless of the technology. This allows us to build from the bottom up and view new technologies as tools that can be used in many different and exciting ways to tell stories in a common and familiar way.

## WHAT TYPES OF TECHNOLOGIES AND CHANGES DO YOU SEE DOWN THE ROAD OR IN THE FUTURE?

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** Cameras may soon reach a point where technology will surpass the desired aesthetics. For example, higher resolution doesn't necessarily mean a better looking image. Higher dynamic range doesn't sit so well with the aesthetics of a nice contrast-filled image. These things have their value, of course, in a world where much of the image processing occurs in post-production. We may see ourselves using certain characteristics of the image in a creative way like we haven't been able to before. For example, a wide establishing shot of a city may benefit higher resolution - where the viewer can see every small detail. However a simple close-up of an actor or actress may seem unpleasing in higher resolution and may benefit from reducing the amount of visible detail. Looking ahead, we see potential in the ever closing gap between computer generated images and live action.

## DOES AFI CONSERVATORY USE DIGITAL? IS DIGITAL A BIG PART OF AFI

**CONSERVATORY'S TEACHING INSTRUCTION?**

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** Digital imaging technology takes a large portion of the curriculum at the Cinematography discipline in the AFI Conservatory. We prepare our Fellows for 'the day after AFI' and the types of cameras and screening technologies they will encounter. In today's industry, the Cinematographer must be able to be involved in every aspect of digital production such as previsualization, on-set management of data, communication with editors and colorists, visual effects and other advanced image processing. Being involved sometimes only means participating in a conversation - and even then the proper vocabulary needs to be understood and used. For example, rec709, LUTs, DCI-P3, 4K, RGB, and RAW are among the many other terms commonly used by Cinematographers. The consistent feedback we get from industry professionals is that the level of conversation they are able to have with our Fellows is above and beyond other Cinematography students.

**WHAT SEPARATES AFI CONSERVATORY'S CINEMATOGRAPHY DISCIPLINE FROM OTHER SCHOOLS?**

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** Film schools all have a duty to stay current with technology and trends. AFI Conservatory has accepted an additional role which goes beyond following current trends, and that is leading in both technology and creative aspects. We aim for what we think a Cinematographer working in this industry should know and be able to do. This vision is ever evolving and discussed with industry leaders who visit the Conservatory and participate in teaching. The result speaks for itself as countless working Cinematographers lead this industry into a promising future. This is not something that eludes camera manufacturers and other companies which are usually eager to donate time and equipment to support our Fellows. By doing this, relationships are formed which help our Fellows as they make their first steps after graduating. More information on the specifics of the AFI Conservatory program can be found at: [www.AFI.edu](http://www.AFI.edu)

**WHAT KINDS OF PROJECTS DO THE FELLOWS WORK ON? HOW MANY HOURS OF WORK ARE REQUIRED?**

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** The first year at the AFI Conservatory in the Cinematography discipline is often compared to Cinematography 'boot camp.' The Fellows shoot and crew on many short films in a span of one year, while also learning about the creative aspect of Cinematography: lighting, movement, color, camera placement and technology. Fellows shoot on film and digital, and actively participate in designing the visual style of a film. They also work with directors and do color correction with the latest tools available. The Conservatory is the right place for those passionate about their craft because Fellows in this program eat, breath and sleep Cinematography.

**WHAT KIND OF MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES DOES THE SCHOOL OFFER WITH FACULTY AND FELLOWS?**

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** The AFI Conservatory offers many opportunities to connect working alumnus with current Fellows for the purpose of mentorship and internship. Each Fellow is assigned a "second" from the second year of their discipline as a mentor. Each graduate is assigned alumni as mentors. Studying Fellows are encouraged to discuss and present their work to as many Faculty members as their time allows, outside of a regular framework in which they have three opportunities

to receive critique in a classroom environment. Individual meetings prior to shooting as well as set visits are occurring on a weekly basis. All instructors in Cinematography are working Cinematographers and find great pleasure in hiring AFI graduates. AFI alumni speak a common language through their hours of crewing and production together and share a very specific dedication and attitude. It is truly a family.

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING FOR FELLOWS AND FACULTY?**

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** At the AFI Conservatory's Cinematography discipline all Faculty members are working professionals. Therefore mentoring, or the connection between Fellows and their working instructors is invaluable. Fellows quickly learn that the difficulties they have on set are not that different than the challenges their mentors are dealing with on a daily basis. That realization elevates the conversation to a discussion about solutions and approaches. Faculty learn from students. It is a mutually beneficial process.

**IF YOU COULD SOME OF YOUR INSIGHTS OR A QUICK TIP WITH FILMMAKERS AND STORYTELLERS AROUND THE WORLD, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

**AFI CONSERVATORY:** Now, more than ever, it is about the story. We encourage filmmakers to forget about the technology for a while and concentrate on what's important. It is about character, or small intimate moments as much as it is about monumental and breathtaking scenes. Find the story first, then find ways to tell it. Come without an agenda towards a specific camera or tool, and you'll be able to pick the best one for a specific task. And finally, be the type of filmmaker that you would like to see yourself as in years to come. It will be the single most determining factor in affecting the environment around you.

---

*Among the many documentaries Stephen Lighthill, ASC has filmed are "Gimme Shelter" and "Berkeley in the '60s". His cinematography credits for independent features include "Over-Under Sideways-Down", "Hot Summer Winds", and "Shimmer", all for PBS' American Playhouse. Lighthill served as Director of Photography on the TV series "Vietnam War Story" for HBO, "Earth 2", and "Nash Bridges". In 2005 he returned to documentaries with HBO's "Boffo! Tinseltown's Bombs and Blockbusters" and HBO's The Alzheimer's Project: "Caregivers". He is on the Board of Governors of the American Society of Cinematographers and the National Executive Board of the International Cinematographers Guild. In 2010, he received the Deluxe Bud Stone award for Outstanding Educational Contributions to the Art and Craft of Cinematography from the ICG and was awarded the 2010 SMPTE Kodak Education Award for Outstanding Contributions in Film Production Education. He served as President of the American Society of Cinematographers, 2012-2013.*

*Tal Lazar is a professional director of photography and has worked on a wide range of projects in genres spanning drama, horror and comedy. He holds an MFA degree from the American Film Institute Conservatory. Before relocating to Los Angeles in 2007, Lazar worked as a director of photography on television shows and music videos in Israel. He previously gained professional experience as a union assistant cameraman working on internationally recognized films. Lazar began his film studies at Tel Aviv University. While pursuing his education, Lazar received the Sharef foundation prize for cinematography and participated in the 2005 Budapest Cinematography Masterclass, instructed by Vilmos Zsmond, ASC, and John Schwartzman, ASC. He participated and produced the 2004 Tel Aviv Cinematography Masterclass, instructed by Adam Greenberg, ASC, and Ricardo Aronovich, AFC. During his final year at AFI he received the FotoKem Cinematography Grant and Panavision's New Filmmakers Grant for his thesis film "Shadow Man". Prior to his film career, Lazar served the Israeli Defense Forces as a staff sergeant. He finished his services with a sign of excellence bestowed upon him by Israeli president Eizer Weizman.*

