

The International Cinematographers Guild
IATSE Local 600

Setiquette

**A Guide to Working Effectively
on the Set**

for Each Classification in
The Cinematographers Guild

Including definitions of the job requirements
and appropriate protocols
for each member of the camera crew
and for publicists

2011

The International Cinematographers Guild
IATSE Local 600

Setiquette

A Guide to Working Effectively on the Set
for each Classification in
The Cinematographers Guild

CONTENTS

Rules of Professional Conduct by Bill Hines (page 2)

Practices to be encouraged, practices to be avoided

Directors of Photography compiled by Charles L. Barbee (page 5)

Responsibilities of the Cinematographer (page 7)

(adapted from the American Society of Cinematographers)

Camera Operators compiled by Bill Hines (page 11)

Pedestal Camera Operators by Paul Basta (page 12)

Still/Portrait Photographers compiled by Kim Gottlieb-Walker (page 13)

With the assistance of Doug Hyun, Ralph Nelson, David James, Melinda Sue Gordon and Byron Cohen

1st and 2nd Camera Assistants compiled by Mitch Block (page 17)

Loaders compiled by Rudy Pahoyo (page 18)

Digital Classifications

Preview Technicians by Tony Rivetti (page 24)

News Photojournalists compiled by Gary Brainard (page 24)

EPK Crews by Charles L. Barbee (page 26)

Publicists by Leonard Morpurgo (page 27)

(Unit, Studio, Agency and Photo Editor)

**Edited by Kim Gottlieb-Walker
Third Edition, 2011 (rev. 5/11)**

RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

by Bill Hines, S.O.C.

The following are well-established production practices and are presented as guidelines in order to aid members of the International Cinematographers Guild, Local 600, IATSE, function more efficiently, effectively, productively and safely performing their crafts, during the collaborative process of film and video cinematic production.

PRACTICES TO BE ENCOURAGED

Knowing and properly practicing one's craft responsibilities;

Knowing to whom one is directly responsible and adhering to that relationship;

Thoroughly knowing, understanding and performing one's craft duties in a professional manner;

Keeping current on the latest equipment, accessories, expendables and production techniques;

Assisting one's immediate superior to the greatest extent possible at all times;

Helping one's crew associates in their duties in any way possible, when called upon;

Always presenting oneself in a professional and considerate manner to crew, cast and staff;

Being at one's assigned post, prepared to perform craft duties, at all times while at work, unless specifically excused;

Dressing in attire appropriate to the type and location of the production;

Maintaining a subdued talk/noise/behavior level on the set or shooting site Be aware and conform to the appropriate tone of the set and take extraneous conversations elsewhere;

Having the camera equipment checked, assembled, adjusted and ready to roll at the earliest possible time for each set-up;

Immediately advising one's superior of any perceived technical omission or commission which may have occurred during production and which could have an adverse effect on the image-capture

process;

Immediately reporting any potential safety problem to one's category crew chief;

Immediately calling one's category crew chief's attention to a possible staffing shortage or irregularity;

Making sure all members of the camera crew on the set including still photographers are members of Local 600;

Backing one's subordinates to the full extent during the production process;

Helping subordinates achieve greater understanding and competence in their work;

Giving credit where, when and to whom credit is due for superior job performance or other invaluable job contribution(s);

Recognizing professional competence and showing mutual respect for other professionals on the production;

Reading and familiarizing yourself with the script, story-boards and production schedule.

PRACTICES TO BE AVOIDED

Being habitually late in reporting for work;

Appearing at work in an unkempt condition;

Doing only enough to get by;

Engaging in any activity while at work which might cause disruption of the production process;

Utilizing company materiel for personal use, without permission;

Leaving one's assigned post, the set, or location site without specific permission from one's immediate superior;

Passing the buck (allowing, or forcing, a subordinate to take the blame for a miscue which, in fact, was one's own, or a shared, error);

Going over or around one's superior or superiors in matters relating to the responsibilities and duties of that, or those, superior(s);

Being openly argumentative with, or hostile toward, one's superior(s), subordinate(s) or co-workers;

Using one's position to verbally abuse, or to make unreasonable (beyond normal specified duties) demands upon, one's subordinate(s);

Ingesting any substance which might impair the performance of one's responsibilities and duties or put one's co-workers and self at risk of physical injury or job termination.

Wearing heavy perfume or aftershave

STAFFING (As specified in the Basic Agreement)

The minimum photographic staff on the main shooting unit of a theatrical motion picture shall be comprised of a Director of Photography, Camera Operator, Still Photographer and at least one Assistant Photographer

**It is your responsibility to report ALL JOBS,
union or non-union, to the union office**

The Director Of Photography

Definitions, Duties and Divisions of Work

As stated in the Hollywood Basic Agreement

The Director of Photography is in active charge of photographing a motion picture or other film or video project, including supervision of the technical crew, process photography, underwater photography, aerial photography, process plates, inserts and special effects photography.

All Directors of Photography shall be prompt in appearing for work as required, shall be responsible for doing their work at all times to the utmost of their ability, artistry and efficiency, and strive to uphold, at all times, the best traditions of the photographic profession, always bearing in mind that upon their efforts rests the ultimate responsibility of reproducing in artistic and visible form the results of the great expenditures undertaken by the Producer. They shall at all times perform their work as efficiently, rapidly and excellently as possible, seeking to heighten the efficiency of the entire production unit in which they work.

Directors of Photography shall, whenever required by the Producer, hold themselves ready to help and advise the Producer, attend story conferences, give their advice and suggestions in connection with the design and selection of sets, costumes and locations and generally render assistance in simplifying production, heightening production values and effecting economies.

The Role, the Responsibilities and the Personal Qualities of the Director of Photography

Directors of Photography stand at the natural confluence of the two main streams of activity in the production of a film – where imagination meets the reality of the film process. They work in an atmosphere that constantly poses new problems, yet often acts as a stimulant and a catalyst to their own artistic vision and technical resourcefulness. It is important that they be as well-informed and involved as possible at all stages and that they work hand-in-glove with the Director, to fulfill the Director's intentions and those of the financial backers, who expect good value from the people they have entrusted with the film.

A primary requirement of Directors of Photography is that they must be able to reconcile the often conflicting forces of the artistic and the mechanical, yet maintain good working relationships with others whose ideas they must respect. But the ideas of the Director of Photography must also take root here and in this difficult environment they must strive to produce the best photographic record that can be made of the production. They plan the filming, light it and shoot it, so they must have a fully developed pictorial sense and a sound understanding of the technical basis on which a film is built. The Director of Photography is an **ARTIST** and a **TECHNICIAN**. But in this most collaborative of professions, it is not enough to simply execute the job to your own satisfaction...the work must be seamlessly interwoven with that of a host of other artists and craftspeople in order to produce the desired result.

Directors of Photography must have a thorough knowledge of staging technique. With this knowledge of film technique combined with the Director's desires, the Cinematographer and Director can work as a team for the most effective and efficient

staging of scenes. The Director's and the Cinematographer's responsibilities overlap, but it often falls to the Director Of Photography to maintain the speed and tempo of the set and to pick up the ball and run with it to help the Director keep the game progressing. Because of the overlap, there are bound to be differences in conception, but this does not mean that there need be disagreement. The Director of Photography must always serve the interests of the Director and the production and keep in mind that all are working together for the same goal – to get it on film in the best manner possible.

All of the above points up the fact that a lot of personality is involved. Directors of Photography must have amicable relationships not only with the Director, actors and Producers, but equally importantly with their camera crew (Camera Operators, Assistants, Still Photographers) for whom they serve as a “parent figure” on the set, and with the Gaffer, Key Grip, Grips, Electricians and a host of other skilled and talented crafts people. If they all respect each other's talents and responsibilities, then the work is accomplished with a minimum of delay and a maximum of quality. The Director of Photography sets the tone and attitude for the entire crew and is directly responsible for the efficient functioning of those categories and classifications under his or her technical direction.

Safety

As head of the Camera Department, the Director of Photography is not only responsible for the photographic look of the production, but also for the health and safety of the crew and everyone associated with them. They, and sometimes they alone, are the sole bulwark or beacon of sanity between the pressures of production and the safety of their crew. In complex and dangerous production situations, this is a prime responsibility. Directors of Photography must never allow the safety of their crew to be sacrificed to the need for speed or economy or the need to make themselves look good; even at the expense of job or reputation. There are numbers posted on every set to call if safety is jeopardized and field reps will come to the set immediately if you alert them to a dangerous situation...**NO PRODUCTION IS WORTH DEATH OR INJURY!** Check with Contract Services for information about the Safety Passport Program and our website for complete safety bulletins dealing with every possible hazard.

Diplomacy

Aside from the obviously essential technical side of the job, Directors of Photography must be diplomats, able to exercise considerable tact and persuasion. They are often required to explain their point of view on the most subtle and elusive things in a scene concerning matters of artistry, safety or efficiency and to be confident that their contentions will prove right in the end. As with everything else in our industry, salesmanship plays an important part. Talent must be sold. Directors of Photography must constantly (but subtly) sell themselves and their ability to Producers, stars and Directors. But they must also have the talent and technical skills to back it up.

Specifics

Directors of Photography must be completely familiar with and able to execute and oversee the lighting of both studio and location settings, the positioning and movement of the camera, the composition of the picture and the use of any special optics or film materials. They must know how to create convincing, believable, artistic shots under any conditions, in all climates, at all altitudes, at sea, in the air, under water or on terra firma. They must be able to take exposure meter readings, select lenses and determine use of

filters. They must be able to call attention to and solve any and all photographic problems pertaining to the production, including problems related to sets, set dressings, scenic art, costumes, hair, make-up, props, process components and photography, matching action and screen direction. They must know camera, optics, lighting, composition, editing, special effects, staging, chemistry, engineering and how to maintain a pleasant and positive disposition.

For equipment, the Directors of Photography may use anything from small hand-held cameras to large wide-screen system cameras mounted on motorized cranes the size of large trucks. They may provide illumination from the sky with small silver surfaced reflectors or from the power house or generators with vast batteries of powerful lights.

Coordinating the Whole Process

Since the Director of Photography's job is a far reaching one requiring a thorough knowledge of not just lighting and camera, but the whole process of how a film is made, it is best if they are brought in at the very early stages of the film to help in planning the shooting. Their advice may have a considerable bearing on the economics as well as the practical possibilities of the production.

As shooting proceeds, Directors of Photography issue instructions to the camera crew, the lighting crew, the grip crew and more. The Director of Photography must act as the catalyst that keeps the show moving at all times by becoming the liaison connecting all the members of the production. They must interface their efforts and those of their crew with those of as many as 15 or 20 other crafts or departments and often as many as 50 to 100 people or more.

Then they must issue instructions to laboratories, including electronic labs, who process and print the film so that the moods or color values of the scenes are preserved or accentuated in the way that they and the Director have chosen. Only when they have seen the finalized versions of each scene can they know that the film is ready to pass completely out of their hands into those of the Editor.

A List of Technical Duties

Maintaining optimum photographic quality of the production;

Selecting the camera, its accessories and associated equipment to be used;

Selecting the film stock(s) to be used;

Determining and/or approving the type and quality of lighting and grip equipment to be used;

Checking and/or film-testing sets, set dressings, costumes, actors, hair, make-up. Props, scenic art and process components for photographic purposes;

Supervising the crews on each of the cameras in use on the production (first and second unit and stills);

Making sure there is full staffing on your camera crew;

Working with the director in the general lining-up and matching of both action and screen direction of the shots (the pictorial continuity of the script);

Setting the camera positions, angles and moves with the director;
Supervising all production lighting;
Determining all exposures;
Selecting the lens for each take;
Setting the composition for the camera operator prior to each take;
Viewing all dailies for quality control and supervising the timing of the work and answer prints;
Supervising the transfer of the image from film to tape.

Summary

Cinematographers or Directors of Photography should possess three major qualities: they should be artists, they should be craftspeople and they should be generals, because when it is time to roll the cameras, it is their responsibility, working with the Director, to oversee and coordinate a virtual army of artists, craftspeople and technicians and effectively command the technical side of photographing a motion picture.

(with thanks to Freddie Young: "The Motion Picture Cameraman," Charles G. Clarke: "Professional Cinematography" and Charles F. Wheeler: Quotes from an interview in the documentary film "The Making of Silent Running.")

Responsibilities of the Cinematographer

(from the American Society of Cinematographers)

PREPRODUCTION

Conceptual Research and Design

Discuss all aspects of script and director's approach to picture in preliminary talks with director

Analyze script as a whole

Analyze story structure

Analyze characters research period, events, general subject and appropriate design elements

Devise style, visual approach

Continue talks with director on new ideas

Come to agreement with director

Discuss and come to agreement with production designer

Discuss and research with technical advisor

Practical Research and Design

Ascertain or find out budget requirements

Scout and approve locations

Plot sun positions for locations

Check local weather

Check tide tables near ocean

Consult with the art department on set plans

Consult with the art department on spotting plans for stages

Review props, picture cars, airplanes, boats, horse drawn vehicles, mock-ups and miniatures

Technical Research and Design

Visit laboratory to calibrate, customize and evaluate exposure system for any combination of electronic or chemical image capture, establish developing, printing, timing and transfer protocols
Visit equipment vendors
Explore new equipment and learn how it works
Invent or cause to be invented special equipment or techniques for show
Standardize and create effects bible for show
Consult with the director and help create storyboards
Design or cause to be designed and approve any built-in or practical lighting fixtures
Design lighting plot plan and rigging for stages and locations with gaffer and key grip

Quality Control

Choose and approve crew, film stock, lab, equipment, second unit and visual effects crews
Supervise manufacture and testing of any new or modified equipment
Visit sets under construction
Review plans for wild walls, ceiling pieces and any moving set pieces
Check lighting fixtures crew
Walk locations and stages with all departments to discuss requirements
Consult with the art department on set colors and textures
Consult with the costume designer on costume colors and textures
Consult with make-up and hair on proposed styles
Generate (or cause to be generated) and approve equipment lists for camera electric and grip
Check dailies screening rooms for correct standards

Implementation

Cast stand-ins
Train crew to use any new equipment
Walk locations and stages with director and devise shooting plan
Make list of special equipment for production manager and indicate number of days required
Work with assistant director on shooting schedule (order and days required for each scene)
Estimate and order film stock (type size, quantity)
Generate (or cause to be generated) and approve rigging and shooting manpower and man-days
Assist other departments in getting required equipment, manpower and tests
Drop by all departments and department heads at least twice a day to answer any questions
Mediate any problems between departments
Check loading of production trucks or cargo containers for location or international shipping
Visit cast run-through and rehearsals
Advise and back up director on any problems

Help producer or studio solve any production problems

Testing

Shoot tests for style

Shoot tests for lab

Shoot tests for lighting of principal actors

Shoot tests for camera and lenses

Shoot tests for wardrobe and make-up

Shoot tests for any special effects process, unusual rigs, props or methods

SHOOTING

Planning

Call in job report to union office

Consult with the first assistant director on the call sheets and shooting order of the day's work

Blocking

Watch rehearsal of scene to be shot

Devise shot list with director (coverage)

Choose lens and composition, show to director for OK

Make sure composition and movement fulfill scene task

Work out mechanical problems with camera operator, assistant camera, dolly and crane grips

Set any camera movement cues

Place stand-ins and rehearse, fine tune

Ensure proper coverage of scene for editor

Work with assistant director on background action

Lighting

Design lighting to show set/location to best advantage relative to story, style and dramatic content

Light each actor to reinforce and reveal character

Make sure mood and tone of light help tell story

Design light for minimum reset time between set-ups

Utilize stand-by painter for control of highlights, shadows, aging, dusting down of sets and props

Set and match light value, volume, color and contrast of each setup (exposure)

Set any lighting cues (dimmers, spot lights, color changes and any pre-programming)

Preparation

Work out any sound problems

Work out any problems with other departments

Consult with the stunt coordinator on all aspects of proposed stunts, especially safety concerns

Set any additional cameras required for stunts

Double-check safety with all concerned and officially establish "hazard pay" and insurance for each stunt set-up

Show shot to director to make any final changes
Get actors in for final mechanical rehearsal; solve any outstanding problems

Photography

Supervise photography of scene
Approve or correct take
Check parameters and reset for next take
Shoot any plates
Shoot any video playback material
Move to next setup

Administrative

Define first setup in morning and after lunch
Make sure stills are taken of each scene (by a Local 600 Still Photographer)
See that Making of" and/or EPK crews get needed footage and confirm that they are Local 600 members
Make sure script supervisor has any special camera or lighting notes
Check film raw stock inventory
Try to shoot up short ends
Ensure camera log book is being kept up to date
Complete day's work
Discuss first setup for the next day
Ensure camera, electrical and grip crews get all copies of equipment rental or purchase invoices and approve before accountants pay vendors
Take care of any future or ongoing production issues
Answer any questions about future problems
Visit production manager and producer at the end of day
Check for return of all unused equipment

Quality Control

Call in for lab report
View previous day's work in projected dailies with director, producer, editor, camera crew
Discuss and approve dailies
Consult with make-up, wardrobe, production designer and assistant director about dailies
View, discuss, correct or approve second-unit or effects dailies
Order reprints if necessary

Training

Teach novice actors movie technique (hitting marks, size of frame, lenses, etc)
Train camera crew for next job up the ladder

Contingency

If director is disabled, finish day's shooting for him or her

POSTPRODUCTION

Additional Photography

Discuss and be aware of delivery dates for all postproduction

Photograph or approve any additional scenes, inserts, special effects or second unit

Timing

Time and approve trailer for theater and TV
Approve all optical and digital effects composites
Time the picture
Retime until correct

Quality Control

Approve final answer print
Show to director for OK
Approve interpositive (IP)
Approve internegative (IN)
Approve release prints
Approve show prints from original negative
Approve all blow-ups or reductions

Telecine/Color Correction

Supervise and approve film or digital original transfer to electronic or film media (High-Def, NTSC, PAL, Secam masters, digital intermediates, archival masters, etc.)
Supervise and approve all transfers to and from digital intermediates
Supervise and approve all letter box, pan and scan, or reformatting of film
Supervise and approve tape to tape color correction and VHS, DVD, digital projection media, etc.
Show electronic transfers to director for OK

Publicity

Do any publicity (newspaper, magazine, internet, radio, TV, DVD commentary, etc.)

Restoration/Archival

Be available for any future reissue, archival reprint or electronic transfer of film.

Director of Photography as defined in the Basic Agreement:

The person who is "in active charge of photographing a motion picture, including supervision of the technical crew, process photography, underwater photography, aerial photography, process plates, inserts and special effects photography....All Directors of Photography shall be prompt in appearing for work as required, shall be responsible for doing their work at all times to the utmost of their ability, artistry and efficiency, strive to uphold at all times the best traditions of the photographic profession and of the Local, bearing in mind always that upon their efforts rests the ultimate responsibility of reproducing in artistic and visible form the results of the great expenditures undertaken by the Producer. They shall also at all times strive to perform their work as efficiently, rapidly and excellently as is possible, seeking at all times to heighten their efficiency and that of the production unit with which they work....

Directors of Photography shall, whenever required by the Producer, hold themselves ready to help and advise the Producer, attend story conferences, give their advice and suggestions in connection with the design and selection of sets, costumes and locations and generally render assistance in simplifying production, heightening production values and effecting economies.

The Camera Operator

Responsibilities

The Camera Operator is the second in authority on the camera crew after the Director of Photography and is directly responsible to him or her for maintaining the composition, focus and camera movement desired by the Director of Photography.

Duties

Lining up and insuring the proper functioning of the assigned camera, the fluid or geared head and related equipment;

Adjusting the ocular to proper personal visual focus;

Determining that the front element of the taking lens, including filters, is properly flagged against any encroaching light which might cause flare;

Operating the camera at all times required;

Being prepared to communicate, if consulted, if the shot was technically acceptable;

Operating a camera hand-held or mounted on a Steadicam or stabilizing body mount, or a remotely-controlled camera head;

Properly composing and framing the subject matter of each shot as indicated by the Director of Photography;

Having adjusted the eyepiece to the proper setting, the operator works to perfect focus, zoom and any T-stop changes with the First Assistant during rehearsals and filming;

Perfecting dolly, crane or boom moves with the Dolly, Crane or Boom Grips during rehearsals and filming;

Giving the sound team safe limits on microphone and/or boom positioning in order to avoid encroachment in frame of this equipment or its shadow;

Communicating with assistant directors regarding background actors, their positions and movements.

Checking the shot carefully for reflections of crew members on shiny surfaces and giving them the perimeters for doing their jobs without ending up reflected in the shot;

Giving the Camera Assistant who is slating the sound take the cue to mark the take when the camera has reached proper sound speed;

Providing the hand tools normally employed in this craft;

Depending on how the show is organized, the operator may be called upon to act in that political zone between the actors and Director, which is most often inhabited by the

Director of Photography. This is a gray area at best that calls for some very sensitive interpersonal skills;

Additionally, the Operator should be in good physical condition to handle the demands of long days with the intense concentration required to do the job well, not to mention having the strength and flexibility required for hand held work and moving all over the dolly during a shot;

The most important duty of the Camera Operator is to *get along* with a lot of people: the Director of Photography, the Director, the actors (particularly), the camera crew, grip crew, electrical crew, set crew, etc. in order to work with ALL of them to line up the shots. At times the Camera Operator will be besieged with questions and requests and must be attentive and sensitive to everyone's needs in a timely fashion. One must speak firmly. Concisely and with kind consideration to all. One must remain CALM, even in the midst of great confusion.

The Camera Operator as defined in the Basic Agreement:

In the operation of cameras, this work shall be handled by a Camera Operator (process plate photography excepted).

PEDESTAL CAMERA OPERATOR GUIDE

This guide is intended to be a supplement to the existing Camera Operator's guide, and should be considered as an extension of the responsibilities and duties of the position.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Pedestal Camera operator do not change with the type of camera used. The operator is still second to the Director of Photography in the chain of command, and should be mindful of the desires or requests given. It is the Camera Operator's responsibility to maintain a professional attitude while executing the job.

Duties

For the Pedestal Operator, there are additional concerns regarding the set up and verification of the camera package. The nature of this camera set up combines three distinct areas of operation; the camera support, or pedestal (think dolly); the camera set up (either film or electronic, think 1st assistant / utility); and the operation of the camera itself. Additional attention of the Pedestal Operator should be given to the following:

Making sure the pedestal is functional; that it has been counterbalanced with the proper amount of compressed air or nitrogen; that there are no air leaks; that the pedestal tracks properly when moved – that it stays in alignment; It is the operator's duty to report any malfunction of the pedestal to the UPM or facilities company. The quality of the floor that the pedestal has to work on should be in the mind of the Operator. The degree of quality of the floor will determine how successful camera moves will be, and awareness of the problem areas will help design successful shots.

Test and balance the camera head; If the camera is mounted on a gear head, either electronic or film, the operator should verify balance and smoothness of movement; if the camera has been mounted on a fluid head, it's the operator's duty to adjust the balance, adjust the pan & tilt handles, and adjust the pan & tilt drag to the operator's liking.

Making sure the camera has been set up properly: It is the duty of the operator to know how the camera has been set up or built. The checklist should start with the viewing system – an electronic monitor that needs to be adjusted properly to insure proper focus & composition. This should include:

Adjustment of Contrast, Brightness, & Peaking to the operator's preference.

If the camera is electronic or digital, the operator must verify what the viewfinder markers and settings are; it is good to communicate with the DIT or VC to determine what has been set. It is the operator's duty to know what format is being shot, what is the "safe" area of the frame, whether it is 16 X 9 or 4X3 or other formats, and how they are displayed in the monitor. It is handy to keep a record of each unique set up for reference.

To insure that the focus readout is accurate. It is the duty of the operator to make sure the focus readout system is displaying footage correctly. The operator should make sure that the system has been mounted properly on the camera. Some concern for good ergonomics and field of view can be applied here: the closer the focus readout system to the main viewfinder monitor the less the eye has to travel to verify footage.

To determine that the lens back focus has been accurately set. Contrary to popular belief, it is NOT the duty of the operator to personally set back focus. On a film pedestal, the 1st assistant has the responsibility; on a digital or electronic pedestal, either the utility, DIT, VC, or DP can set the back focus of the taking lens. Having said this, the Pedestal operator CAN set the back focus as a matter of personal preference. The duty is to determine if it has been properly set by consulting with the appropriate personnel.

To know what type of filters are being used, if any, in front of the lens. In the case of electronic cameras, to check the internal filter settings as well, especially if moving to an exterior setup to make sure they are correct.

To adjust the focus and zoom controls to personal preference. There are several different zoom and focus controls available to the Pedestal Operator. It is the Operators duty to make sure the controls work properly and to report any problems without delay. It is good to know that there are some zoom speed controls on most digital cameras that act in conjunction with the outboard zoom control.

As has been said before, the duties of the Pedestal Camera Operator still include all the proper etiquette for working on the stage. Aside from zooming, focusing, composing, and moving at the same time, striving to maintain "gracefulness under fire" while performing the tasks at hand enhances the Operator's professionalism. There is a sense of "courtesy" involved with any Camera Operator's job, whether conventional, electronic or pedestal. The product we produce is the fruit of a great collaborative effort among many people, functions, and crafts. Making sure that you as the Operator have enough time to set up your camera to your specification is a "courtesy" to yourself and to your employer. Being mindful of how the Operator fits into the larger "picture" is important.

The Still Photographer

(Stills/Portrait Photographer)

by Kim Gottlieb-Walker, Doug Hyun, Ralph Nelson, David James, Melinda Sue Gordon and Byron Cohen

Duties

The Still/Portrait Photographer's primary job is to interpret the project in single frames which accurately represent the story, production value, stars, and feeling of the show. These images are used to publicize, entice, and seduce the potential audience into watching the show. Whenever the public is exposed to images other than video or film regarding a show, they must be shot by the unit still photographer.

The still person will work both during actual filming/taping, during rehearsals, on or off the set. He or she will shoot available light but is also capable of doing fully lit shoots with either his own lighting or in conjunction with production.

More specifically, the still photographer takes production stills that the publicity department can use to promote the film or television show in press kits and various print media and the increasingly important DVD stills galleries. This includes characteristic shots of each scene, shots which show the actors acting together, shots which give a feeling of the look and atmosphere of the show, good character shots of the actors, shots of the director directing, special effects being rigged, special make-up being created, anything which could be supplied to the regular or genre press or used later on the DVD to promote interest in and expand knowledge about a production.

But beyond that, because the Still Photographer is the only person on the set authorized to take photographs, he or she may, if time allows, serve some of the photographic needs of the crew. This may include (but is not limited to):

detailed documentation of the sets (in case they must be re-created at a later date);
historical documentation of the production (including guests on the set and the crew at work);

photos shot specifically for inclusion in the production as photographic props -
Sometimes the still photographer is called upon by either the prop or set department to create shots of the actors or sets for use as set dressing or hand props which are integral to the storyline. These jobs may only be performed by a union still photographer. Often due to time constraints, shots are turned around immediately on the set and printed to order as needed. These situations would usually justify a premium fee for such services. Often times these situations might also include photo retouching or compositing. The still photographer may perform these functions as well and should charge extra for this. The prop dept might have a budget for these extra services which should go to the still photographer.

merchandising reference shots (especially on science fiction or other genre productions where shots of props, costumes or sets may be turned into toys);

and possibly (though rarely now) continuity shots to help wardrobe, make-up and script supervision when requested, although continuity has largely been taken over by each department using small digital cameras. When it has been approved by the producer, it is permissible for a designated representative from each department to take their own continuity photos as long as there is a full time Photographer on the production. Only these pre-approved crew members may use digital cameras on the set to prevent the

unchecked proliferation of people shooting photographs which jeopardizes set security and creates a chaotic atmosphere around the talent, hampering our ability to do our job.

Because of the extreme challenge the still photographer faces at trying to obtain his shots, Hair and Makeup should only capture their continuity photos in the makeup and hair trailer. When the AD sees the set time being eaten up by Hair, makeup, wardrobe and props shooting the actors on the set prior to filming, they understandably feel that no more time can be afforded to the still man to get the shots he needs. A paparazzi situation can ensue creating confusion and hurt feelings which could be avoided if the still photographer's position as the sole photographer on set was recognized.

Crew members from any department who are attempting to create a portfolio of their work need to contact the publicity or photo department to obtain official stills from the production. No producer wants to see his project represented by an amateur photographer creating unauthorized unapproved photos.

Diplomatically, if there is any shot requested by a crew member which will not jeopardize set security and is allowed by the producers, it is sometimes a good idea to have an extra camera handy to accommodate such requests. This is entirely optional, but can help forge good relationships on the set.

The Guild is always happy to receive pictures from the still photographer of the camera crew at work for the monthly newsletter, **Camera Angles**, and **International Photographer Magazine**. The Guild publications are an excellent way to have your work seen by other members both of Local 600 and by Producers and other production personnel and our publication policy is to only use the work of our union still photographers.

DIFFICULTIES:

In shooting production stills, the Still Photographer always needs a place to shoot from which gives a "clean shot" without light stands and flags or fellow crew members in the background. Sometimes only very specific angles will work to produce a usable picture, and it is very important that the rest of the crew understand this and attempt to accommodate those needs. A Still Photographer might only be able to shoot a usable still from one place, while a Script Supervisor might be able to see the scene well enough from a number of places. Sometimes having a Camera Assistant move a few inches one way or another or having a light stand or flag adjusted slightly can make the difference between getting the job done and not getting anything at all.

Sometimes the Director or AD will allow a few moments when a scene has been completed for the Photographer to take key shots from the video or movie camera's point of view – this requires asking for extra cooperation and patience from the actors to perform key moments once again, and is very difficult to do if crew members obliviously walk through the frame or begin to strike lights or sets.

On multiple camera shows (sitcoms, for instance) the Still Photographer must be especially careful to be aware of the code marks on the floor which show where a camera is going to move next. Don't be afraid to talk to the dolly grips and if unsure stay back until you see the rehearsals. During the production, it is vital that you not be in the way of the Dolly Grips who will be constantly moving and repositioning cameras throughout a scene and who must find their marks on the floor, where you might be standing. Be very aware of which marks are for which scenes so you do not block them

from the Dolly Grips' view.

When a set-up shot is required by the publicity department, a member of that department should be present to help inform the actors and direct the set-up, but as this can not always be guaranteed, letting everyone know about the situation as early as possible is important so it can be included in the schedule.

Many problems can be avoided by negotiation before a show begins and by making sure you have good communication with the publicist and making sure the producers understand what you will need to do the job properly for them.

Still Photographer: PROTOCOL

To be successful on the set you have to be both a creative photographer and a diplomat.

When arriving on a set for the first time, it is very important that the Still Photographer introduce himself or herself to the key personnel. It is absolutely essential to have the cooperation of the Director, the Assistant Directors the Director of Photography, the camera crew, Gaffer, Key Grip and the actors. They need to know who you are, why you're there and what specifically you may need during the course of the shoot. As part of the camera crew, you fill out a time card in order to get proper credit for your hours for Motion Picture Health and Welfare. If for any reason, the production resists giving you a time card, call your union rep to intercede for you.

If the 1st AD knows in advance that a particular setup is crucial to the publicity department, they can plan ahead for an appropriate time to do it and warn the actors and crew to be prepared for it. If the actors and crew know in advance that you usually run in after a take to grab shots, they will continue to act, stay out of the background and keep lights lit for a few minutes after hearing "cut."

The Key Grip can be a great ally when you need an emergency ladder or apple box. It is very important to be present for blocking and rehearsals to know where likely shooting spots will be and to coordinate your moves with those of the Dolly Grips (or camera peds) and it's always a good idea, particularly on a multi-camera show, to work out a warning system with the Dolly Grips, so that if you are about to be blind sided by a fast camera move, they can give you some warning rather than risk both injury and ruining a shot.

It is also very important, if you should need to use a strobe or flash of any kind (as with a Polaroid camera or when documenting sets or diplomatic shots with guests using a strobe) to yell "FLASHING!" before taking the shot so the electricians will know that the ensuing flash of light does not represent one of the stage lights blowing out.

It can also be very helpful to be briefed before hand by the publicity department or the Producers as to any idiosyncrasies the Director or actors might have and thereby avoid any embarrassing show-downs on the set. The Publicist should work closely with you to assure that everyone knows exactly what is needed and to help set up shots with the actors when a special set-up is called for. Likewise, you can be of tremendous help to the Publicist by using your expertise in recognizing and recommending the shots which will reproduce best when the Publicist must pick out the best possible production stills for the press kit or publicity release.

EYELINE

While most professional actors are used to stills being taken during a scene, some are easily distracted by a still camera. Always be aware of the actor's eyeline in a scene. This is where the actor is directing his attention (the other actor in the scene) and is usually on the opposite side where the first AC or focus puller is situated. If you find yourself in the actor's eyeline stand still and if possible keep your face down. At cut, back up and take position on the other side. Often the assistant is in your way but if you ask he will usually give you a shot either by moving in or out from the camera.

EQUIPMENT

Almost all still photography on the set is now done digitally. On rare occasions, film may still be used.

Film Cameras: To work effectively on a set, the still photographer should have at least two 35mm cameras housed in custom blimps, in order to shoot as silently as possible during takes. It is wise to have an extra camera body fitting in the same system in case of jams or breakdowns. A full complement of lenses would include: 28 mm, 35 mm, 50 mm, 85 mm, 105 mm and 135 mm. Sometimes a 200mm might be useful, but it generally does not open up far enough to accommodate the low light levels on many sets. A monopod can come in very handy when using a long lens, especially in low light situations. It is a good idea to keep an extra 35mm camera handy with a strobe attachment for dealing with things occurring off the set, out of the lights, and to deal with diplomatic photos requested by producers, actors, crew members, etc. This camera can also be used for set documentation. It is wise to have both incident and reflective light meters, a jacket with lots of pockets for lenses, and a good supply of sharpies and envelopes (for marking film cans and to package exposed film for the lab with whatever labeling is needed).

Digital Cameras: Not only do you need to provide the digital camera and lenses and flash cards (which the production company should supply, as they often do with film), but you may also need to provide a laptop computer, CDs, DVDs, a disc burner and often a portable printer for creating last minute photographic props. The photos must be downloaded and either burned to CD/DVD or transferred to a portable hard drive for delivery. The union lab for the production should do all numbering, converting, labeling and printing. The production company should not expect these functions to be done by the still photographer.

A wardrobe of dark clothes comes in very handy on dark sets to lessen any distraction to the actors. (A Still Photographer can be a very easy target for a distracted actor looking for a scapegoat.)

It is also important to find a safe place for your equipment which also provides easy access. This might be the camera truck, camera room or some other place which the Director of Photography and/or Assistant Directors may be able to help provide.

Ideally, the producers should also provide insurance for your equipment, whether film or digital, and make sure you have a safe place to keep all of it on the set

RENTAL

It is the Producer's responsibility to pay for rental of your equipment, and the base rate generally used by the photographers of Local 600 to cover the rental cost of two 35mm

camera bodies, an appropriate set of lenses, 2 blimps and a light meter, is around \$150. a day (from a rental house this figure would be closer to \$250./day), although it might be more depending upon the extent of the equipment you provide. Extra cameras, strobes, cameras with other ratio formats, tripods, backdrops, etc., all would justify higher rental charges to the production company. Providing them with a price list from any local rental house will assure them that they are receiving a bargain by paying your daily equipment rate.

If providing digital equipment, the rental can range from \$250.00 to over \$500.00 per day depending on the extent of equipment and extra services provided (potentially including lap-top computer, CD burner, and printer as options). If you provide prints for the production, you should charge them per print (generally around \$10 and up depending on size) and cost of burned CDs (generally anywhere from \$8 to \$15.). Negotiation on these extra expenses has become a large part of our job. Episodic Television generally pays from \$150 to \$250/day for digital equipment rental.

An alternative to burning the CDs/DVDs, if you are working on a big-budget studio motion picture, is to ask the studio's lab for some external hard drives, put your images on them and send the drive to the lab which will transfer and send it back to you. With two or three drives in rotation, it can save you a great deal of time and hours of CD/DVD burning. Some photographers simply turn in the flashcards, but only if the company has provided them initially.

Any work done after wrap to transfer and/or process the images for the production company must be compensated, but any manipulation, numbering, labeling or printing of images is rightfully the work of the lab, not the photographer.

GENERAL NOTES

When getting a job call, always call the union office in your region to let them know about the job. Keep track of the expenses you incur, including number of rolls of film shot, as well as your equipment rental which you bill back to the production company...this may be of help to the Guild later if it becomes necessary to double check the costs involved with a show to determine if it qualifies for the low-budget agreements or not. You may not accept less than the union minimum for the type of production you work on, and you should fill out a time card to make sure you receive credit for the hours you work toward your health care and pension. If you have any problems on the set with the production company ignoring safety rules, or trying to undercut the union contract in any way, do not hesitate to call the union office to let our business managers handle the problem for you. They are THERE to protect your interests and make sure you are not abused.

If you have a problem, do not hesitate to call your Guild representatives.

STILL PHOTOGRAPHERS as defined by the Basic Agreement:

Operation of all still cameras used for the purpose of performing work covered by this agreement shall be performed exclusively by Still Photographers covered by this agreement (except for pre-production location identification still pictures or pre-production still pictures made away from the Producer's premises for identification purposes only, for set design or decoration, but not for publicity purposes...)

The Camera Assistant

by Mitch Block

The classification of Camera Assistant encompasses both the First and Second Assistant. The responsibilities of the Camera Assistant on any film set are numerous and seemingly never ending. Though separate titles, the First and Second Assistant work together as a team, along with the Camera Operator and the Director of Photography to keep the cameras running at peak performance, without jeopardizing any of the production schedule.

The Second Assistant's job could be divided into a number of categories, the set, the darkroom, and the paperwork (including time cards for the entire camera crew).

The work done on the set should be the top priority of the Second Assistant. This includes making sure that all the right equipment is on the set, keeping the batteries charged, being present to mark the actor's positions during the rehearsals, along with marking the slate at the beginning of every take. This alone would seem like a full time job, but sometime in between all this, the Second must find time to go to the darkroom and take care of loading magazines, when there isn't a Loader on the crew.

The Second Assistant's responsibilities in the darkroom are to maintain, and load the film magazines with the correct emulsions, download, can, and label the film once it's been shot so it can be sent to the lab for processing. Given all the different emulsions being used these days, and a limited number of magazines on any given production, it is quite a juggling act keeping the right number of mags filled with the correct emulsions.

Along with all the duties the Second Assistant must fulfill in the darkroom and on the set, he or she must also take on the task of filling out all the paperwork that is needed on a daily basis. This paper work includes the camera reports, time card records, camera equipment inventory lists, and daily film inventory sheets.

Overseeing all these duties, along with a long list of his or her own, is the First Camera Assistant. These duties start even before the camera equipment is prepped. Prior to doing this, the First Assistant should discuss with the Director of Photography what the basic requirements will be for the project, and coordinate with the rental house to have them ready to go. Once the equipment is prepped, inventoried and shipped, the responsibilities shift to the set.

The First Assistant will usually service, clean and build the camera, then take a look at the call sheet and see what the day has in store. When the camera and the Assistant reach the set, it should be loaded and ready to go. You might say that the rest of the day the First Assistant and the camera become one. Leaving the camera is not done very often during the rest of the day.

The focusing of the camera is just the beginning of a long list of continuing responsibilities that belong to a First Camera Assistant. This task takes a sharp eye and quick reflexes by itself, add a zoom lens to this and it becomes a very considerable feat. Adding to that list, the First Assistant must take care of what filters are on the camera, set the T stop, frame rate, and shutter angles for each and every shot, change lenses, load the camera with film, convert to hand-held mode when required, and know every piece of the camera and related equipment like the back of his or her hands. Adding to that, when not on a dolly the First Assistant must lift and carry the camera and

equipment to whatever position is needed for the shot.

Both the First and Second Assistant should keep a low profile on the set. They should always conduct themselves with respect and professionalism at all times. Knowing this can make or break a career. Needless to say it takes a very dedicated person to fill the shoes of a Camera Assistant.

Additional Duties:

Checking that each fresh load of film has been properly threaded in the camera;
Checking that the buckle switch is reset and the footage counter is zeroed with each fresh film load;
Checking that the shutter position, T-stop and camera speed are correctly set prior to each take;
Have on hand: compressed air can, a/c ext. cables, power strips, cube taps, label maker, various nuts and bolts, 3/8 inch camera bolts, wrenches, US & Metric Allen wrenches, jeweler and regular screwdrivers.

THE FIRST ASSISTANT PHOTOGRAPHER as defined in the Basic Agreement:

The first assistant photographer shall maintain the camera for operating purposes at all times and all the necessary accessories. He shall, in actual shooting, regulate all focus changes, record meter readings, execute use of filters, gauzes, mattes and diffusion discs, handle various types of lenses and equipment and any further or incidental work that may be required.

THE SECOND ASSISTANT PHOTOGRAPHER as defined in the Basic Agreement:

The second assistant photographer shall assist the First Assistant Photographer in the use of all motion picture photographic equipment, make hand tests, place marks, run the tape, make out photographic logs and reports, handle the slates or clap sticks and reload all magazines.

Film Loader

The film Loader is at the bottom in the "Chain of Command" of the camera crew, however the position is one of the most important. The film Loader is more than just responsible for the loading and down loading of film. The Loader is expected to know the basics of production and to be an asset to the crew.

Some of the very basic tasks are:
Down-load and reload film successfully using different types of magazines. Making sure the correct prints are marked on the camera reports via the Script Supervisor;

Maintain and fill out the purchase orders for the lab. Doing this correctly and accurately adding various notes depending on the days events;

Maintaining stocks and keeping an accurate inventory;

The position of Loader must be held for one year before moving up to 2nd

Assistant. Good Loaders are very hard to come by and usually move up to 2nd Assistant when their year is up. Depending on the Loader as an individual, moving up to Second may or may not be a wise choice.

The Loader must be neat, organized and be able to anticipate conditions and or equipment to come. Most of all, having common sense is something that can be used all the time, not just on the production set. The Loader must also work in the confines of a small dark room, changing bag or camera truck and still be organized. The film loader is the secretary and yeoman for the camera crew.

Keeping notes organized;
Making phone calls to various vendors;
Keeping the dark room and camera truck clean;
Ensuring the crew has the correct start paper work.
Also always thinking of the well being of the camera crew;
Be a "Team Player."

The film Loader makes the 2nd Assistant's job easier. If there's any approach to the job, then that is one of the most important. Having the proper attitude and decorum will ensure future employment. There are so many nice and pleasant camera personnel out there to work with. Why would anyone one want to work with a person who is abrasive and abusive and has a bad attitude on top of that? Film-making can be fun and enjoyable but still be serious enough to achieve the goals of the Director and other artists.

The camera crew must work together for long periods of time in various climates and conditions. If you can still have a good attitude after 18 hours of labor, more than likely you will be called back again and again. Your physical strength is a factor as well, to stay healthy physically to carry large cases and move equipment on various filming platforms is a must. Your mental health is a factor to be dealt with as well. Thinking about domestic problems while you are downloading or reloading film is not a good formula for success and a long career.

Having the right gear when you show up on set will help set the tone of your day. Asking questions of the production office when getting the call is the key. Day or night exterior, cold or hot environment, loud noises or gunfire – these are all conditions that must be addressed when preparing for your next day call. The tools of the Loader are basic and numerous (some of the items below are "expendables" which may be supplied or reimbursed by the production company). However, through experience and questions your kit will grow constantly.

Cans, cores, reports, daily film inventory, canned air, calculators;

Pens, pencils, markers, chalk, (which would include lumber crayons, slate markers, china markers, grease pencils), batteries, light meter batteries;

Large and small slate, changing bag, various paper and cloth tape, lens fluid, lens tissue, Ziploc bags, large garbage bags, tarps, space blankets.

THE FILM LOADER as defined in the Basic Agreement

The duties of Film Loaders shall be to keep reports of film as checked out of the loading

room, to handle and load in the loading room all film magazines and to aid in storing all camera equipment in the camera department or in the loading room.

LOCAL 600 DIGITAL CLASSIFICATIONS

1. **Digital Imaging Technician:** the DIT may set up and supervise end to end workflow to ensure the integrity of the image from the point of capture through to the hand off to post production
 - responsible for all in-camera recording, digital audio acquisition, genlock and timecode processes in the camera with a complete understanding of how they are integrated into digital acquisition format and postproduction environment
 - responsible for ordering, preparation, set up, operation, troubleshooting and maintenance of digital cameras (provides oversight of Camera Assistants and Utilities), wave form monitors, down converters (Hi-Def to other formats), monitors, cables, digital recording devices, terminal equipment, driver software and other related equipment
 - performs advanced coloring/shading of cameras, encompassing traditional Video Controller duties; responsible for color timing including but not limited to: adjusting, balancing, registering and setting timing, matching electronic contrast, brightness, quality and edge definition; matching of cameras, color consistency (RGB) exposure (iris), density (master black), electronic color balance (chroma, hue and saturation), of each camera and its monitor and totally matching camera inputs to the VCU and checking the wave form monitor and the vectorscope
 - data management: performs or supervises the downloading, cloning/duplication of the digital media containing the image and inputting of metadata up to the hand off to Post production (may be performed by a Digital Loader)
 - exercises supervisory responsibility for technical acceptability of the image.

2. **Camera Utility:** assists the Digital Imaging Technician and/or Video Controller in the preparation and set up of the cameras and cabling
 - responsible for preparing cameras for shoot when such duties are not performed by the Technician or 1st AC: building & mounting cameras, matching correct lenses with each camera position, cleaning camera, lenses & filters, back focus, confirm zoom-focus-communications operation & color charting cameras; assists the digital imaging technician or video controller in the electronic set up of the cameras
 - wrangles cables during rehearsals and takes, and assists the camera operator during complex pedestal moves (does not focus)

- sets up, maintains and moves quad split and other monitors, cables and all other camera accessories
3. **Digital Loader:** the duties of Digital Loaders are to handle, inventory, transport and download all digital media magazines (whether utilizing tape, discs, flash memory, hard drives or other media), including the cloning/duplication of the image and inputting of metadata up to the hand off to Post production
 - keeps reports of digital media as sent to and received from the transfer facility (if such work is performed off-site); and to aid in the setup and storing of equipment utilized by and within the jurisdiction of the camera department
 4. **Digital Utility:** an additional hire to wrangle cables connected to the camera and assist in the movement of racks of equipment (monitors/decks/time code generator/camera control unit) as necessary, under supervision of the DIT, Technician, 1st or 2nd camera assistant or Camera Utility

Preview Technician

By Tony Rivetti

Job summary: The equipment used in this position plays many roles. Using a laptop computer is essential for on -the-go locations. Working closely with the DP they may ask for something right away, and you must be able to accommodate them at any time.

Tools Used: Laptop/notebook computer, Photo quality printer, Digital camera w/ memory cards, firewire cables, USB cables, Photo glossy printer paper, printer in cartridges. Some printers may vary in size but all must be able to produce true to life photographs. Other tools include blank CD's, memory card readers and various cleaning supplies. **During the course of a day a preview technician may be called upon to do the following tasks...**

Calibrate the computer screen so that the color matches the printer. Color match photographs from previous days for color timing. Work closely with the DP on set while lighting. Compose different pictures according to the DP's preferences. Print different variations of each photograph. Organize all preview system equipment, ie. printer's, cables, computers, organize photo's to send to the lab. Download all information from the digital camera into the computer. Compose pictures using the following programs: Adobe Photoshop, Iphoto, Adobe acrobat, Appleworks, and Kodak preview software. Composing a scoreboard so that the DP can see his/hers progress during the course of the show. Keeping logs of what color balance they used for a particular scene, so that they can go back to that point at any time. Some cinematographers may require a preview system tech to lighten or darken exposure in accordance to what they want the end result to be with the lab. They may also like to

view different filters before shooting a scene, in order to preview the scene's highlights, midtones, and skin texture. At the end of the show the Production/DP may also request a scrapbook of all the shots composed during the course of the show, either for revision or for later pick-up scenes. All of the equipment used is an essential part of the camera department.

“Operation and maintenance of Kodak/Panavision “PreView” System or other similar digital image gathering system for the purpose of manipulating the image to be captured or to maintain the consistency of lighting, color, filtration and/or contrast.”

News Photojournalist

by Gary Brainard

Definition of the News Photojournalist

The News Photojournalist's job includes work in connection with the operation of portable electronic equipment commonly referred to as electronic news gathering (ENG), satellite news gathering (SNG) and electronic field production (EFP). This includes, but is not limited to, ENG, EFP cameras, recorders and all related or associated equipment necessary for the duties as a News Photojournalist.

News Photojournalists may also be assigned to a mobile vehicle for the direct transmission of material for news, program or sports purposes from a remote location. This involves the use of either a live truck, satellite uplink truck or portable electronic transmission equipment. The News Photojournalist may also be responsible driving the related vehicles. The News Photojournalist is responsible for camera operation and microwave transmission from helicopters. In many situations, the News Photojournalist will also be responsible for lighting at remote locations well as audio hookup as necessary.

The duties of the News Photojournalist

Beginning of the day:

- Do a quick inventory to confirm you have all the gear assigned to you;
- Confirm that all rechargeable batteries are charged up;
- Clean camera lens and check for proper operation;
- Check that camera and tape deck are clean and operating correctly (Running a quick tape test is the best method);
- Check all microphones for proper operation;
- Check that you have plenty of spare bulbs, expendable batteries, gaffer tape, tape labels and markers;
- Make sure you have enough raw tape stock.

During the shoot:

- Check white and black balance each time the camera is turned on;
- Confirm clean audio in the camera with an earphone;
- Set or zero timecode as needed;
- When doing live shots, confirm video and audio with live truck;

Always do a final check for gear before leaving a location.

End of the day:

All equipment returned to proper storage;
Compare to equipment starting inventory;
Equipment problems reported to maintenance;
Batteries on charge;
Vehicle refueled and maintenance problems reported;
Fill out time sheets to reflect hours worked. Always keep a record and ask your crew chief for assistance if needed.

Safety Issues:

By the very nature of what the News Photojournalist does, it is very important to maintain a safe work environment. The News Photojournalist is often assigned to cover fires, police activity, civil disturbances and disasters. It is important to be aware of what is around you, and in the case of brush fires, always keep an escape route in mind. For any questions about safety issues, contact your Crew Chief or the Camera Guild.

When working a live truck, always check overhead for any wires before raising the mast. NEVER raise a mast under wires. NEVER move the truck while the mast is raised any amount.

When working a helicopter assignment, always approach the helicopter from the front, maintaining eye contact with the Pilot and following his direction. Always stay away from the tail area while the blades are turning. Once inside the helicopter, check that your body harness is properly connected to the helicopter and your body.

Summary

Professionalism, safety, common courtesy, respect of others, attention to technical detail and continuing education of the craft are traits that make a good News Photojournalist.

EPK Crews by Charles L. Barbee

Shooting Behind The Scenes or Electronic Press Kit (EPK) has many similarities to the Still Photographer's job on a set. This type of work is usually documentary in style. As in most documentaries, the cinematographer or videographer is often shooting hand-held among subjects who are doing what they would normally be doing anyway. If the project is being shot on film, it will likely be 16mm or Super 16 and the basic crew will be a cinematographer, a first assistant (who is also loading) and a sound mixer (who is also booming). If shooting video, the crew will probably consist of a videographer and a sound mixer. In some cases, particularly if the project is being done with one of the smaller DV camcorders, the EPK crew may even be a one-person-band, although sound is always compromised in some way when this staffing choice is made.

The most important thing for an EPK crewmember to keep in mind is that the set of a movie or television show, even though seemingly a public and sometimes chaotic place, is really someone's private office or workshop. As an EPK crew member you are a "guest" on the set. If you remember this and act accordingly, you will get far better access to shots than if you don't. Just because you have permission to be on the set doesn't mean you have permission to do what you want, when you want. A working set

is a complicated environment, operating under the tight control of a few, key people. It is wise for a behind the scenes crew to always keep this in mind.

Usually the EPK crew will be met or escorted by a publicist or public relations person working for the studio or production company. Depending on the project, the EPK crew may be under the rigid control of the publicist, or they may have the "run" of the set. Usually it's somewhere between the two extremes. This is where political savvy on the part of the "guest" crew is extremely valuable.

It's always a good idea, before you start shooting, to ask to be introduced, or try to introduce yourself to at least two key people - the 1st Assistant Director and the Director of Photography. The 1st A.D. runs the set, minute to minute, and the 1st A.D. can be your best friend on the set...or your worst enemy. Making friends with the Director of Photography and the rest of the camera crew, especially the operator(s) and 1st Assistant(s), will often give you access to help that you may not have gotten otherwise. When they know who your are and what you're doing, it makes it easier for them to be helpful. Learn from the camera crew what the frame-lines are for any given shot. If you need or want to get close to that frame-line, ask permission. When the crew/actor/director know that you know what you're doing, they are more apt to trust you.

As the EPK cameraperson should relate to the production camera crew, so too should the sound person relate to the production sound crew. Be sure your sound person does this. If you're using RF microphones, be sure it's ok with the production mixer. It is often possible to take a "feed" from the production mixer and this is often by far the best sound one can get of the actors during rehearsals or takes. If you're using a boom or fishpole, make sure no one on the set objects. Be extremely careful about boom shadows and about getting in the way of the production boom operator.

Be aware of actor's "eye-lines" and at all times avoid being near one, unless you've asked and been given permission. This is as bad as accidentally getting into the shot. Some actors are very sensitive about it, especially when it's someone or something new and unfamiliar. If you are in or near the eye-line of an actor, minimize your movement as much as possible. This is also a good reason to always wear plain, dark, nondescript clothing which doesn't make noise when you move or walk.

One of the first things I try to impart to anybody I come in contact with on a set is that I will defer to their needs/desires at the blink of an eye. One of the worst things an EPK crew can do is assume they have a "right" to anything, or to start acting like paparazzi. I go out of my way to tell people that I respect their turf and ask them to tell me if I'm in the way or in danger of being in the way. I try to tell anyone I'm going to be filming that they are in control and if they don't like what I'm doing, just wave me off and I'm gone. I find this often opens doors which would otherwise be closed. This is particularly true when trying to work in close, which you can often do if you win people's trust

Be aware of all of the various departments that might be actively working on a given shot at a given time and be sure you aren't making it difficult for someone without knowing it. This can happen when an EPK crew is given a lot of leeway by a Star or Director or Producer. If you're not careful, you might find yourself making things tedious for people who may feel they cannot object for political reasons. Always try to tune-in to that possibility and do your best to avoid it.

The Publicist

As motion pictures and television shows have become more complex and technical, the work of the publicist has become more diverse and specialized. And as the cost of producing and marketing a movie has continued to escalate, the expertise of the cost-effective publicist (as compared to advertising) has become even more essential.

“Publicist” is a catchall designation that describes a wide variety of duties. Sometimes they overlap. Usually they cooperate. Occasionally different agendas can produce friction.

The four major areas in which a publicist works are “unit,” “studios,” “personal or agency” and “photo editors.” There are other specialties, but it would take a canvas much larger than available here to describe them.

The publicist will typically have a degree in marketing, communication or journalism and might have worked as a journalist.

UNIT PUBLICIST

The unit person is the publicist who works most closely with his or her colleagues in the International Cinematographers Guild. This publicist forms a team with the still photographer, but is basically a department of one.

The publicist will suggest possible photo set-ups, write photo idents, select photos and secure photo approval from the stars.

The unit publicist is spokesperson and point person for the production, dealing with outside people who visit the set or who have an interest in the production.

He or she writes a preliminary and final press kit.

Sets up and handles electronic and print media visits to the set, both domestic and international, ensuring that everyone from the director and stars to the cinematographer, producer and a.d.s is aware and, where appropriate, approves.

Writes publicity proposals and press releases.

Coordinates activities of the electronic press kit and DVD crews. The EPK crew, incidentally are, or should be, members of Local 600 as well.

Writes special material for prospective promotion partners.

Works with the releasing company’s advertising department.

STUDIO PUBLICIST

The studio publicists are members of the marketing department and work in a variety of capacities in the overall campaign to promote their movies or television shows. Following are just some of the tasks undertaken by today’s studio publicist

Plant stories in the electronic and print media, including monthly magazines, which have a deadline that could be several months ahead of a film’s release.

Work with the all-important trade press. Both these jobs entail maintaining a relationship with the media and gaining their trust. This means never pitching a story or an angle that you know is untrue and never promising an exclusivity and failing to deliver on that promise.

Set up screenings for the media and providing press information and stills or slides.

Organize junkets so that the media has the opportunity to interview the director and stars. These junkets can either involve actual travel from city to city or be held in one place, the interviews being done via satellite.

Hire and work with unit publicists.

Create and maintain web-sites for your movies or shows. Creativity and originality are very important.

Organize premieres, which includes getting the stars and other “A” list celebrities to the event, setting up media coverage, working with caterers, limousine services.

During the latter part of the year work on the Academy Awards kicks in. Special screenings are organized, mailers as well as DVDs and video cassettes are sent to Academy members. An extra push is given to publicizing films that are considered award possibilities.

If the publicist works in the international department there is a different kind of workload. He or she will work with the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (the Golden Globes) or other foreign journalists who work in Hollywood or New York. Visiting foreign journalists must also be accommodated. Every major studio has branch offices in most foreign countries. They have to be furnished with publicity material, much of it specifically designed for the international market. Publicists working in those countries must be supervised. The international publicist will organize the studio’s participation in international festivals such as Cannes. This includes getting stars there, arranging accommodation and travel for them and studio executives, setting up press interviews, organizing dinners and parties. Frequently stars or a director will do a promotional tour of Europe or elsewhere. The studio publicist will organize that and often travel with the celebrity.

The studio publicist often has to work with niche markets, such as university campuses, Hispanic, Asian or African American communities, or find the outlets for specialty films such as science fiction, sports or foreign language.

A fairly recent specialty for the studio publicist is placing stories and photos on the numerous web-sites out there. It is the publicist’s job to keep up on this rapidly changing landscape.

Publicists also work on promotions, such as book or music tie-ins. There are cross-promotional campaigns with car manufacturers, soft drink makers, fast food chains, toy manufacturers, department stores, airlines—any company or product that can get your movie noticed.

AGENCY PUBLICIST

The public relations agency fulfills many needs, frequently working closely with major studios. They can be hired on a film by film basis, which keeps down the studios’ overhead, or they are retained on an annual basis, receiving a monthly fee for their work.

Perhaps the most recognizable type of agency publicist is the one who represents stars and other celebrities—the personal publicist. This person’s primary function is protecting the image of his or her client. Sometimes this means insisting on a magazine cover, say, if the client is a major star. At other times it means refusing media coverage altogether.

This will sometimes put the personal publicist at odds with the studio publicist. The personal publicist is, therefore, a gatekeeper, a hand holder, a diplomat, a father or mother confessor and even a best friend. If a high profile client gets into trouble then the publicist’s job is to minimize the effect.

While some p.r. agencies concentrate their efforts on personal representation, others will also handle corporate clients. This could be a studio or an upstart production company or a non-entertainment industry entity. The publicist’s task in this case is to build name recognition through carefully planted stories in the trades. Sometimes it is necessary to advise a client not to publicize a particular project or hiring because all the pieces are not

yet in place or the timing is not right. It is important to keep your client aware of what you are doing at all times, through reports, phone calls and personal meetings. Other agencies specialize in niche markets, such as the aforementioned Hispanic and African American markets. Yet others have earned a reputation at planting stories electronically via satellite news feeds or organizing satellite junkets. Some specialize in web site design.

A truly different kind of publicist is the trailer supervisor and there are agencies that specialize in this. Trailers are a key element in the marketing of a motion picture or TV show. They are frequently the only way that a prospective ticket buyer will know about it

PHOTO EDITOR

Although the photo editor is a member of the studio publicity staff we have given him a separate category because his work is primarily a visual function and not a function of the written word.

He will frequently recommend a still photographer for a particular show and will shepherd the photography through the studio hierarchy. It is his job to scan through thousands of transparencies and proof sheets and pick out the few pieces that will truly represent the show. He has to be aware, not only of the studio's publicity needs, but also its promotional and advertising direction and select the right images.

The photo editor will also hire photographers the studio uses at premieres and other high profile events. The editor's job is to select the right photos and e-mail them to the media—and do it in time to catch deadlines.

International Cinematographers Guild IATSE Local 600

One cannot speak about a photographic career in the entertainment industry without mentioning the International Cinematographers Guild, Local 600 of the I.A.T.S.E. It is the place to find the most dedicated, experienced and talented people anywhere in the industry, the ultimate in professionalism.

The International Photographers Guild has been organizing the world's finest camera people for many years and continues the tradition into the 21st century by keeping its members on the cutting edge of technology.

Remember to call in every job you take.

Be proud of your membership and do not compromise the terms of the contracts under which we work.

The Contributors:

**Charles L. Barbee – Director of Photography, National Executive Board,
Peabody and Emmy Award winner**

**Bill Hines, S.O.C. – Camera Operator and Author of “Operating
Cinematography”**

**Kim Gottlieb-Walker – Still Photographer, National Executive Board
and still photographers Doug Hyun, Ralph Nelson, David James, Meloinda Sue
Gordon and Byron Cohen**

Mitch Block – First Camera Assistant, National Executive Board

Paul Basta – Camera Operator, Ped Operator, National Executive board

Rudy Pahoyo – Camera Department, Paramount Pictures

John D. O’Brien – Video Controller, Western Region Executive Board

John Palacio, Video Controller

**Michelle Nobles – First Camera Assistant, Digital Imaging Technician,
National Executive Board**

Robert Zeigler, Digital Imaging Technician

**Tony Rivetti – Camera Assistant, Preview Technician, SOC Lifetime
Achievement Award**

Gary Brainard – Chief Cameraman KCOP TV / UPN News

Leonard Morpurgo - Publicist