

Just imagine this...

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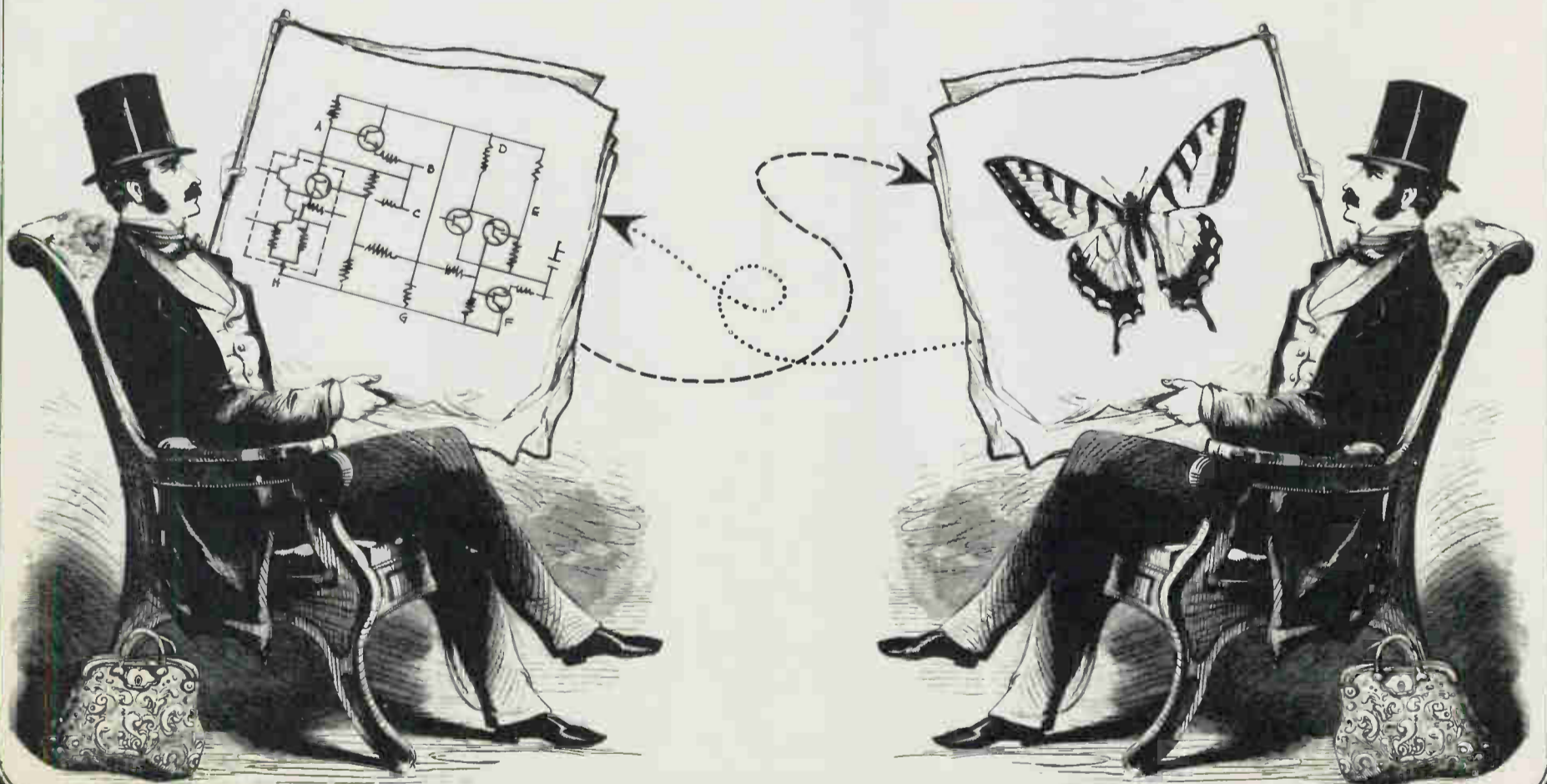
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I have asked Bob Oakley, a writer, director, videotape editor and program producer for Westinghouse Broadcasting Company, to review some of the new equipment featured here, with the graphic designer in mind. Hopefully, this will give you a broad overview of where we are so that you can pursue specifically what interests apply to your situation and station at this time.

Lou Bortone



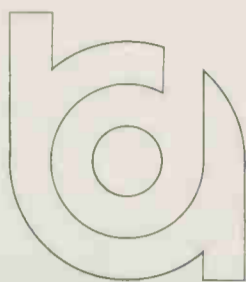
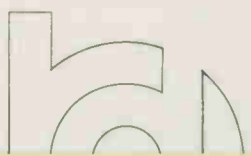
Published by the Broadcast Designers Association Volume 2, Number 1

Bob Oakley

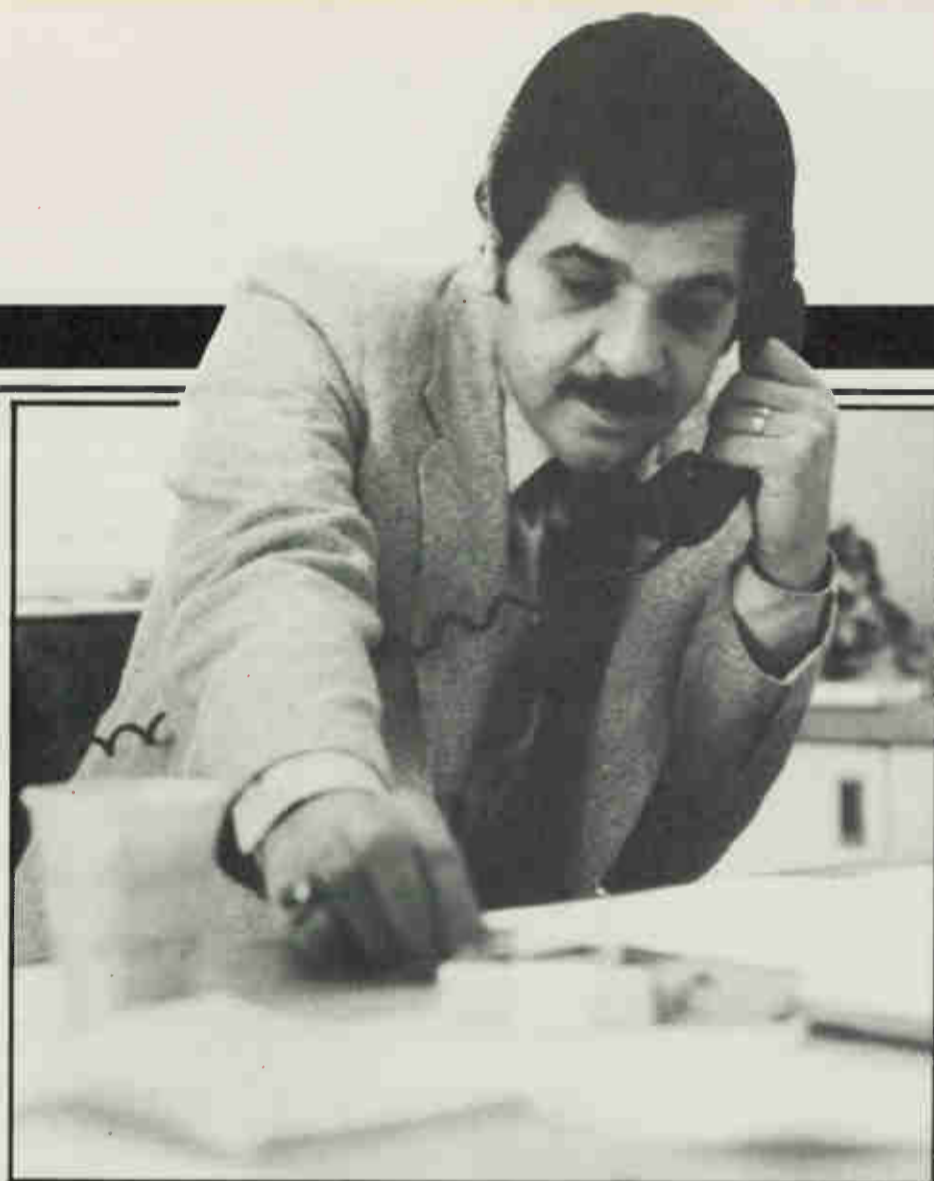
tools and the authority to do their job properly. At the same time, the designer must learn the realities of

your attendance. See you in Montreal.

Dick Weise, BDA President



BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION



Michael Mohamad

It's emblazoned on the back of his royal blue velour robe. It's kept him awake nights. It once arrived in the surprising shape of a -- would you believe -- roman candle. And it perches, in novelty neon, over his right shoulder against a many windowed Rockefeller Center office wall.

It's the fabled NBC Peacock. And its designer, Michael Mohamad. Thirty-four-year-old vice presidential graphics whiz who has restored the dozing logo to a now vibrant reality.

"I'm afraid you can only call me the re-designer", chuckles Mohamad, who modestly admits, "the original peacock was created with such pizzazz, it was hard to beat. I started playing with it, oversimplified it, and spent hours and hours searching for a modern peacock. Even tossed and turned in the wee hours of the morning. First and foremost I knew it had to signal "entertainment" -- immediately. A symbol has to register quickly; a viewer shouldn't spend time working on it. It must be designed so colors are adaptable; obviously, on air it's employed in one way, in print, another. On air I try to achieve a dimension to it by a powerful rainbow of integrated color. But the basic design is maintained in both".

"NBC has an important history. Over the years it's meant many things to many people. And the peacock is part of our tradition. I'm delighted that the return of my feathered friend has generated all this excitement inside and outside

the industry. I have a busy staff of about three dozen people and hardly a day goes by when somebody doesn't comment on the fact that the always-talked-about peacock is, well, here to stay. It is, I might add, thanks to Fred Silverman, who advised the advertising staff some time ago that when the time was right, the peacock would fly into our lives again. Our symbol is one of the most recognized in America."

On the NBC staff for eleven years, Chicago-born Mohamad currently wears a variety of plumed hats. He's V.P. Advertising as well as V.P. Design, responsible for on-air design and print copy and design as well. Which includes radio, news, sports, tune-in, made-for-TV-movies, affiliates' and owned-and-operated advertising. "Even once in a while", he adds, "we design for the local station." He frowns, "in fact, there is so much responsibility that often I get blamed for something peacock-y I had nothing to do with."

"A designer is privileged in working at NBC, specifically, and in television, in general", he continues, "there is the natural excitement of the pace and ever-increasing freedom of creativity in the industry as a whole. For instance, in any given day I can work on a radio print ad, a sales design piece, on-air animation, or a design for a truck or remote unit. It's in essence a designer's dream - to be allowed to sit down and do what one wants to do. But it

doesn't come easy. You have to make split-second decisions and must communicate to others with speed and efficiency. We're in a highly competitive business. It requires long hours of commitment to the company, exceedingly long days. And, the ability to look at other people's work and say to a designer, "I would not have done it the same way but you have met the criteria well."

Mohamad calls on-air design 'motion graphics.' "We've moved at a highly rapid pace in this field", he concedes, "certainly we've improved what was being produced ten years ago. The only fault I can see today is the duplicity everywhere. Instead of inventing innovative techniques and styles, often designers jump on the same bandwagon. That's disturbing. Because design then becomes short-lived. Good design should never be abandoned. And a smart designer must respect the written word and appreciate its contribution to design."

Schooling was the singularly most creative influence in Mohamad's life. While at Winthrop Junior High School in Brooklyn, a buddy pleaded for Michael to accompany him to the High School of Art and Design in Manhattan. "I wasn't eager at first", muses Mohamad, "I dreaded the long commute. But I had a persuasive friend. And he had a way of manipulating my own father who appeared dead set against it. My father was a man who understood labor, trades. He was Palestinian, born on the West Bank, and married a Lebanese woman from Canada. We had simple lives. I was the next to youngest of four boys and three girls. I suppose when all was said and done my family would have preferred me to continue in their tradition, which is understandable, but once I was in High School I got the bug. Encouraged by my teachers I worked hard. After graduation I went on to N.Y.C. Community College. Then landed my first job in graphics while attending Brooklyn College at night. I eventually went on to Cosmopolitan Magazine and various agencies. When I came to NBC I became particularly intrigued by on-air graphics, what I termed 'motion graphics.' So I spent weekends hanging around the on-air operation. Nobody else seemed to care much about it at the time. And I learned not only design but, more importantly, advertising. My first film assign-

ment, "The nicest things this Fall on NBC", 10 years ago, was too soft-sell according to management. In my enthusiasm I missed the point. It taught me a lesson."

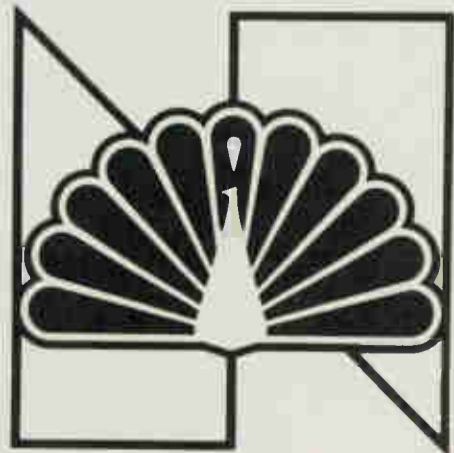
Spare time is not a phrase Mohamad uses often. Years ago he taught a Motion Graphics course at Pratt but now his rare hours not spent at office or home with his wife and two children are devoted to the local schoolboard. "I actually got elected Vice-President", he acknowledges, "and helped by a "Jews For Mohamad" movement in my local district, a mixed ethnic neighborhood. I care deeply about education."

"I had a tough time at the beginning of my career -- it was difficult for me to convince people if I could design an editorial spread that I could do a print ad for television. So I am very sympathetic to everyone who comes for advice, to show me his or her work. First and foremost, I look for good taste. And when asked for advice, all I can think of is to say feel free, to try everything imaginatively, and to always strive for originality. If our medium is appealing to designers on any level they'll keep trying to break into the broadcast field. But they must keep in mind the drawbacks as well as the perks. Those long demanding hours and the inevitable pressure. And balance that reality against the excitement of the present and the possibilities of the future in a field bursting with innovation and challenge."

With these hurried words of wisdom, Michael Mohamad dashes off to another meeting, conceivably another crises, and most definitely another peacock.

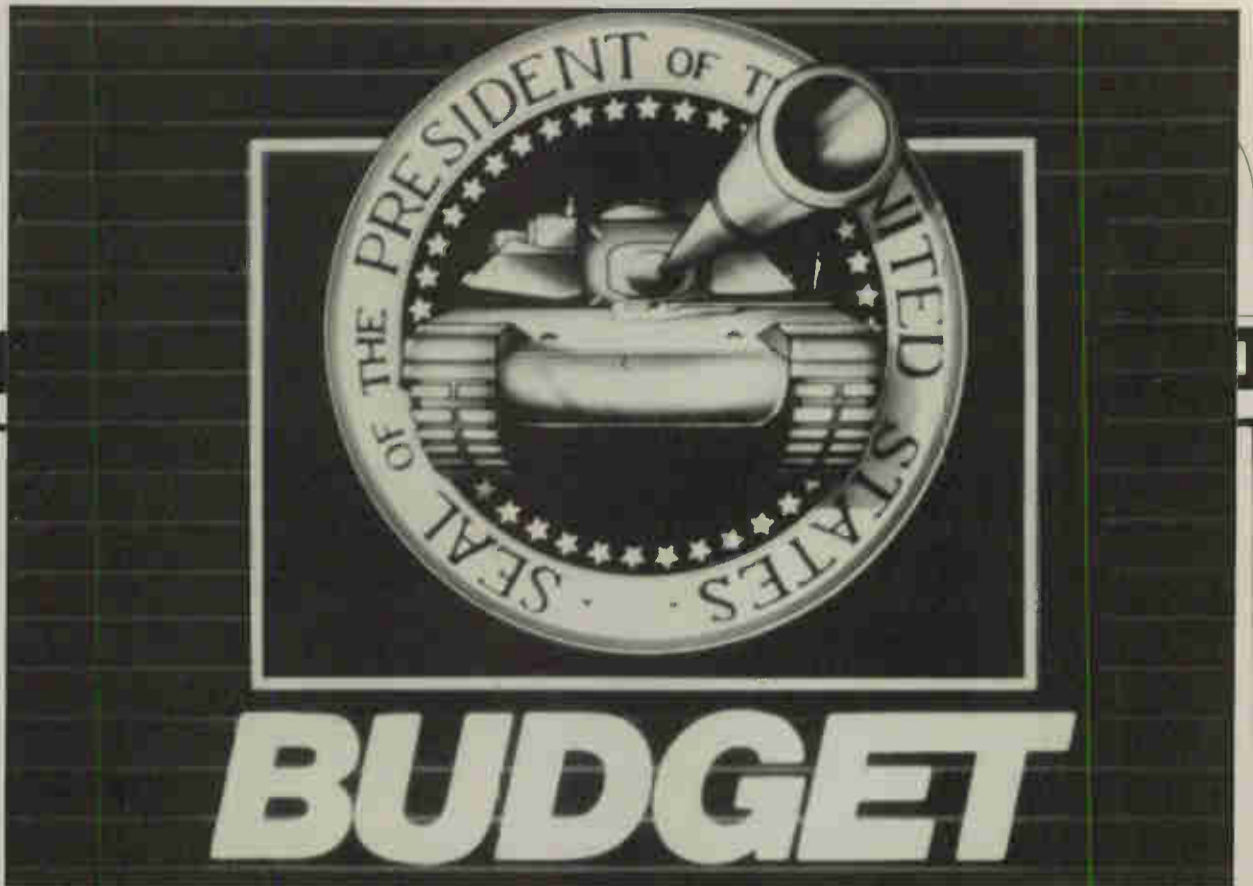
He is, at that moment, living graphics in motion.

Leslie Rubinstein
Director, Editorial Services-Print
NBC Advertising & Promotion





White, WHAS-TV



WPLG, Miami



Michael Reinhart, TV Ontario



WPLG, Miami



WPLG, Miami



Gwen Gipson, WXYZ-TV



C. Collins, KNBC



Robert R. Sanders, KWGN, Denver



R. Rix, CBC, Canada



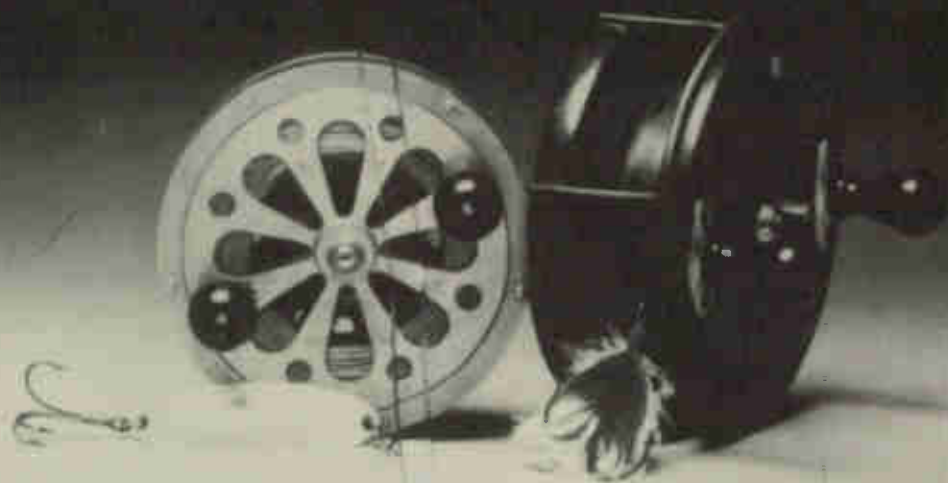
Jill Cremer, KABC-TV



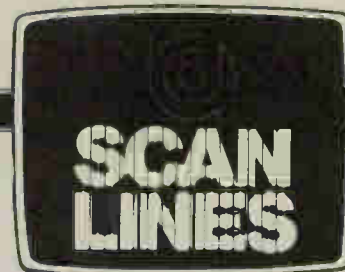
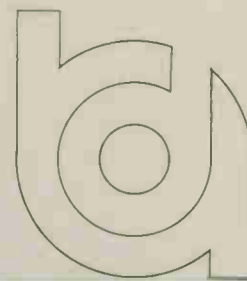
Gwen Gipson, WXYZ-TV



 TVOntario



R. Derhodge/G. Scheuer TVOntario



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Lou Bortone

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BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Broadcast Designers Association is a national organization, founded in 1977, which serves as a meeting ground for television art directors and designers and other related professionals. A four-day seminar, in conjunction with the Broadcast Promotion Association, is held annually for both social and business related meetings, to deal with and share current related subjects and concepts. The BDA serves to keep its members abreast of new design trends, graphic/technical information and the latest state of the art equipment and materials available. The BDA is a non-profit organization.

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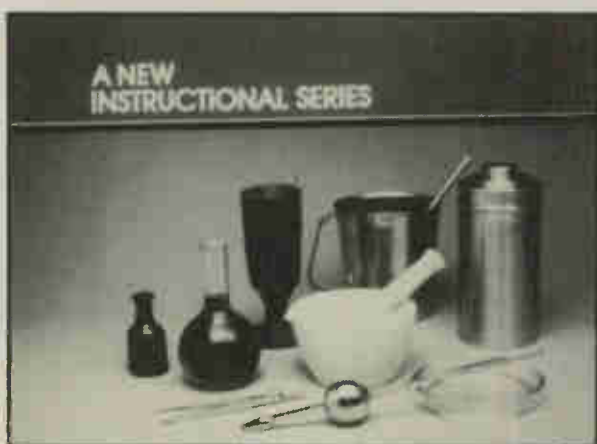
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Deadline for next issue of SCANLINES is February 3, 1984



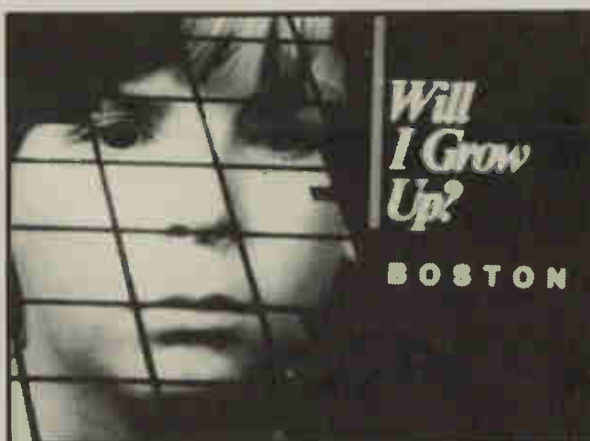
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Dan Coggins, CFQC, Canada



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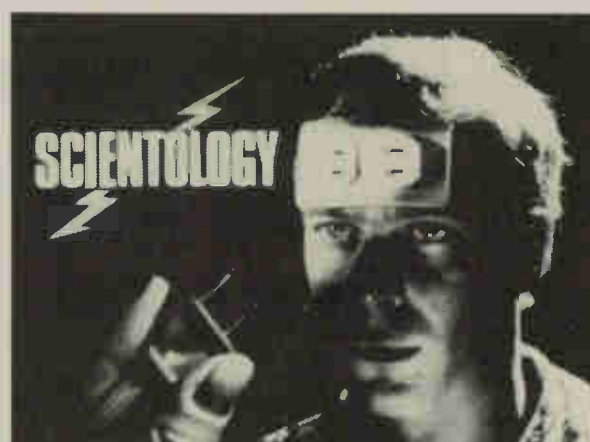
Steve Epstein, KABC-TV

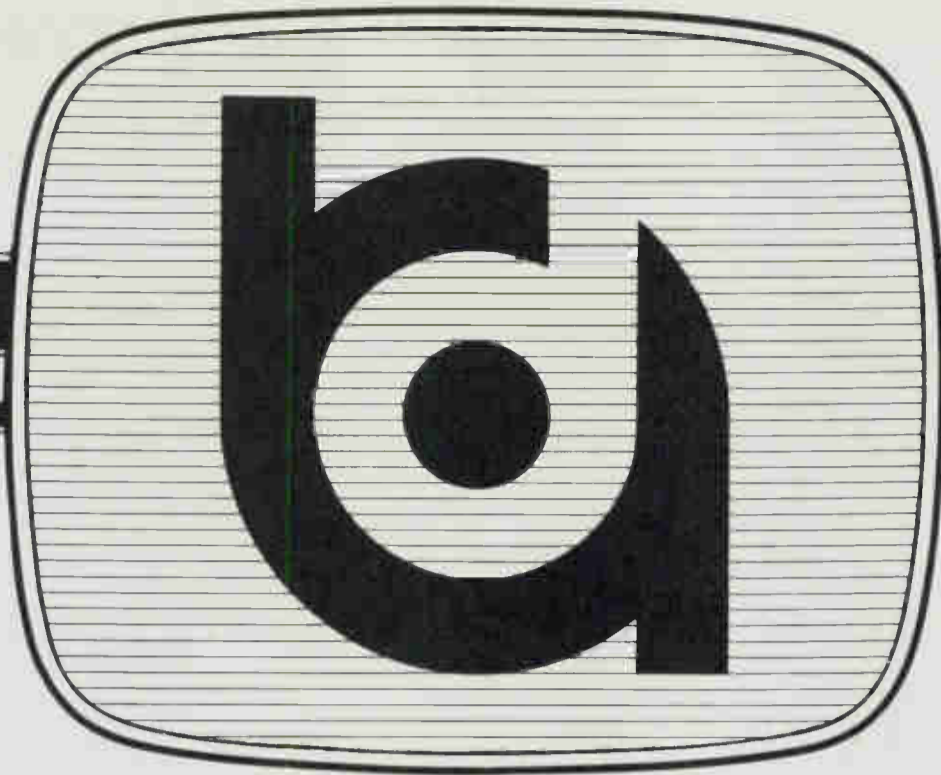


M.J. Vilaridi, WDVM-TV



Linda Nelson, WNAC-TV





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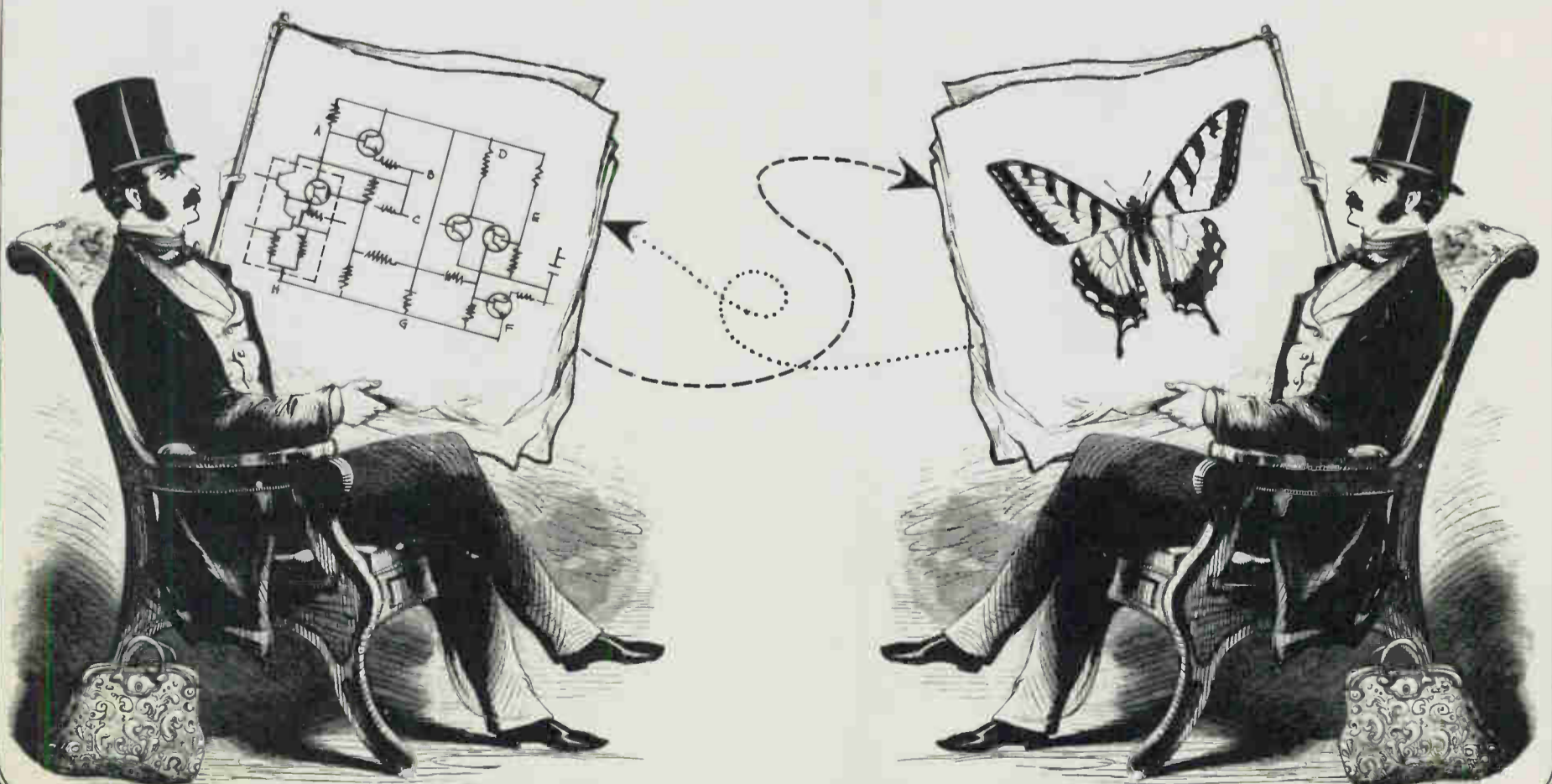
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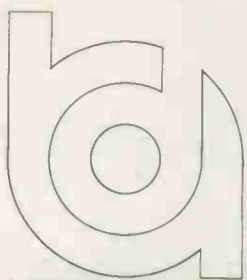
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Lou Bortone





BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

Vid-Wiz

The heart of all videotape post-production effects is the Video Switcher. This item literally mixes video sources, whether from live cameras, film projectors, or video playback decks. The switcher, in its most basic use, makes transitions from one scene to another, either by cut, dissolve, or wipe. Any number of scenes can be shown in sequence. It's interesting to note that in many cases film can be edited by transferring the film A and B rolls to tape then mixing with the switcher. The obvious advantage to this procedure is speed, flexibility, and seeing your finished product as you create it.

The switcher can do a lot more than just move from one scene to another. Through the processes of keying and chroma-keying, it can easily generate matte effects, inserts, and colorizing effects.

The "keying" circuit of a switcher is designed to remove all elements of a television picture that are below a certain relative brightness level. This level can be selected and adjusted. The switcher can then insert another picture, or a solid color if desired, into the areas

of the first picture that were eliminated, creating a composite picture.

But it's important to remember that each of the colors shown on TV has its own relative brightness, as demonstrated by the familiar color bar pattern that TV engineers spend so many hours of their lives watching. In black and white, a color bar pattern represents various shades of gray, from black through blue, red, magenta, green, cyan, and yellow, to white. Therefore, if you have a blue logo on a black background, and you want to "key-in" a scene over the black, it will take a fine adjustment of the switcher to remove the black and leave the blue, which is very close to black in relative brightness. Designing graphics with the color-bar chart in mind prevents these close-value problems and will also make your graphics more distinguishable to those people who do not own color TV sets.

"Chroma-keying" avoids the relative-brightness problems of straight keying, but introduces other problems of its own. In chroma-keying, the switcher is programmed to remove any elements of the picture that are of a certain color, and to replace those areas of the screen with parts of another picture. Any color can be used as the "key" color, but in

most cases blue is used, especially if a person is in the final scene. Blue is the smallest color component of TV flesh tone, and the keying process will affect the flesh tone the least if the "key" color is blue. Of course, just make sure your talent isn't wearing blue clothing!

Just as the video switcher can remove certain colors from the screen, it can also add colors by way of the "color generator". This circuit enables you to insert any color you want into those areas of the screen that were removed by straight or chroma keying. It can also simultaneously replace light or white type with another color. Therefore, the most useful graphics to TV producers, in these cases, are "reverse" or white type on black backgrounds.

One of the important effects available from a switcher is the ability to "wipe" from one shot to another in any of a number of ways. Most switchers have a row of wipe buttons that indicate an A to B wipe along most two-dimensional planes, plus round, saw-tooth, box, oblong and countless other design possibilities. Although the overuse of wipes, (especially so called "whacky wipes") can be tiring, when design discretion is used, they can also be effective and attractive. Split-screen wipes with "soft-edged" borders are just one example.

Many switchers have a quad-split

circuit which can put segments of pictures into each corner of the screen. Remember, though, that only "segments" of pictures can be shown and the original pictures have to be shot with the split-screen effect in mind; the action must be positioned for the split in the camera viewfinder. An ordinary video switcher cannot squeeze, compress, or shift a subject into any other area of the screen than where it was originally.

In order to enhance this usage, "Digital Video Effects" switchers were developed a few years ago. These machines can virtually start with a picture and compress, enlarge or shift it around the screen in a variety of ways. These units are rather costly and relatively new, so you may have to go out-of-house to find one. But, the convenience of creating an effect as you see it happen makes the effort worth while. These new digital effects switchers have inspired a whole new vocabulary of terminology, such as:

COMPRESS - a complete TV picture squeezed on any plane, or compressed on both horizontal and vertical planes simultaneously, to give the effect of a zoom-out. The picture can literally be shrunk down to nothing. In addition, the switcher can key-in a color or another picture behind it, so that it reveals the new picture as it shrinks.

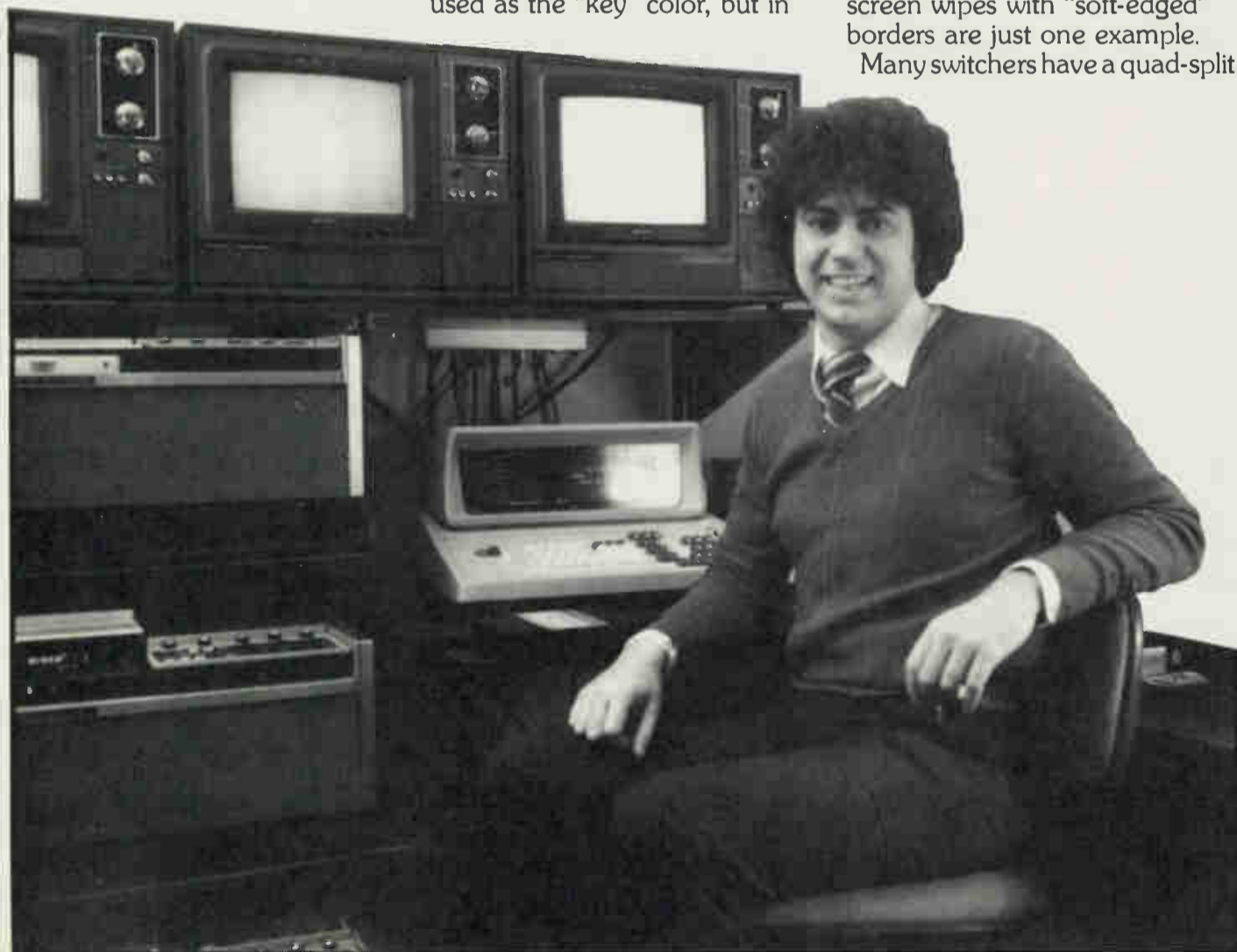
ENLARGE - the opposite effect. The picture can be stretched on any plane, or on both horizontal and vertical planes simultaneously, to give the effect of a zoom-in, or magnification.

MULTIPLE IMAGE - digital effects switchers allow for an almost unlimited number of images to be shown simultaneously, either side by side, or overlapped. Of course, now a quad-split picture can be easily obtained by compressing and shifting four pictures to the quadrants of the screen.

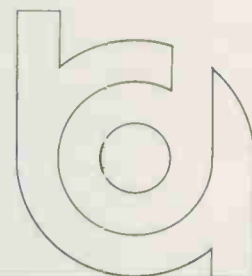
REVERSE IMAGE - where a TV picture is "flopped", or reversed.
MIRROR IMAGE - where a TV picture is split down the middle, and one half plus its mirror image are shown simultaneously.

FREEZE FRAME - where the action on the screen is frozen while the sound track continues. In "Auto Freeze", freeze frames are automatically taken in timed intervals, to give a jerky, animated look to the action.

There are many more video effects possible with a digital video



Bob Oakley, writer, videotape editor, director, and producer for WBZ-TV's marketing unit in Boston.



switcher, in which images and pictures interweave, flop, bounce, and skitter across the screen in a variety of amusing ways. What's more, many of these effects would be either impossible or prohibitively expensive to do with film optical houses.

In addition to video switchers and digital effects switchers, the new generation of one-inch video tape player/recorders have a few surprising effects built into them, as well. Paramount among them is completely variable slow-motion and freeze-frame, a feature that was previously obtainable on video disc recorders.

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But the most spectacular advances in creative video technology have been made in computer-generated animation. The equipment used for this process is costly and bulky, and is thus the province of computer-animation houses, rather than TV stations. Simple images can be flexed, colorized, echoed through video feedback, solarized, and put through unbelievable contortions to produce futuristic, mind-boggling effects.

In this space we've been able to touch on only a very few of the effects available to you with today's video equipment. What's more, many of these effects elude accurate verbal description, being as they are purely visual experiences. But every good technical director loves to experiment with his equipment, and will be eager to show you the effects he has on hand. In addition, manufacturers of digital effects equipment have demonstration cassettes available, as do computer-animation houses. If you take the time to explore what your station's post-production capabilities are now, you'll be able to plan and make the most of your future productions. You may find that certain visual concepts that you've been wanting to express are well within both your reach and your budget. Good luck!

Bob Oakley



Dick Weise, President, Broadcast Designers Association

President's Report

The year 1979 was an eventful one for our fledgling organization but 1980 is going to be even greater. In February, for the first time, several Art Directors representing the BDA will make a presentation at the annual NATPE Convention in San Francisco (National Association of Television Program Executives). It is indeed a rare opportunity for us to display the value of good design to a large audience of Program Directors and General Managers. It is also another positive step toward better understanding and recognition of the television designer.

I would like to reiterate what I have said many times before...for a designer or art director to be effective and successful in our industry, we must be in a position of respect and responsibility. We cannot operate effectively from a subservient position. Managers must learn to give the designer the tools and the authority to do their job properly. At the same time, the designer must learn the realities of

the business world and learn how to sell his ideas. (If what you really want to do is paint, then get out of television and rent a studio with north light!) If we cannot sell our ideas to those in the decision making positions, then we cannot be effective at our jobs and both the TV station and the designer suffer.

The BDA will continue to do all it can to educate both the designer and the manager in an effort to attain our mutual goals...better design in television and more status and compensation for the TV designer.

A great deal can be learned at our annual seminar this year in Montreal. Begin now convincing your general manager on the tremendous value of the BPA/BDA Seminar. There are many great workshops and exhibits scheduled as shown in this newsletter. Use this to show your GM how much could be gained by your attendance. See you in Montreal.

Dick Weise, BDA President

And, I Quote...

"The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten".

"Compromise is an essential ingredient of progress".

"Most laymen are not especially imaginative until something is created...then they react to it."

Just... Star-Gazing

Ever stop to think...if Tuesday Weld married Frederick March 3rd, her name would be Tuesday March 3rd! Or, if Dody Goodman married Truman Capote (aint likely), her name would be Dody Capote! Some of the star's names are indeed, a bit much. Rip Tom, Gale Storm...why not Stark Naked?...or Candy Barr?

If you have any fun marriage combinations or nutty names, give us a yell, and we'll share them next time around.



b

BROADCAST DESIGNER

TV Guide advertising for television stations is somewhat unique. The product being advertised is programming, but no two products are exactly alike! The product has several facades; a name, a star, a title, a time, a day, a place, and more. Despite this confusion, there is probably a better than average chance that your ad will actually get read by more people than will read a typical newspaper or other magazine ad. The reasoning being that viewers buy this magazine for its listings and your ads are, in a sense, modified listings. TV Guide editorial matter is confined to the front and back sections of the book thus is virtually non-competitive to your ad. Your only competition in a typical two-page spread (which is all one can see at any given time), is the listings which are a non-descript gray, and the other ads on that spread. In fact, the listings are often more helpful than hindering because of their mutual gray tone.

For the most part, TV Guide ads function as "reminder" advertising rather than "sell". Even so, the object is to capture the reader's



Looking Around

attention and transmit information. Some of the same print advertising rules apply. Be simple, bold and direct not subtle, cute and suggestive. The premise should be that the reader is lazy and will definitely not work at reading your ad; it must be "spoon fed"! Determine your best sales point, be it picture, headline, movie title or star name, and give it top priority.

Generally, TV Guide ads are considered "small space" advertising which is a special breed of ad. By the very nature of the lack of space, the creator is forced into being brief and simple. Given

several elements to cram into a confined area, the designer has to be an architect at space allotment and put his entire "bag of tricks" to work. Unfortunately, many TV Guide ads reflect this and are often cluttered and gimmick laden.

In an effort to gain attention on a page, two of the directions many ads have taken are black backgrounds and/or slanted type. The so-called "slant" style has been running rampant over the past two years by both network and locally originated ads in TV Guide.

It is said that News is one of the

most difficult types of ads to do successfully, The days of expounding on how many news vehicles, camerapersons, reporters, et al, covering the scene are no longer in vogue. So, what can you promise that the other station in town can't match? Promote your news talent and your feature series, then hope they are strong rating-getters!

I have tried to show a cross section of some of the styles and formats now being used throughout the country. If I had the space, I would show these ads within a two-page TV Guide spread with other ads fighting for attention, for indeed, the true test of a successful ad is to see it in its natural habitat.

In the next issue, we would like to cover the subject of "Holiday ID's" Of Course, I'll need your help in supplying the subject matter. Send along any holiday ID's, new or within a year old in the form of 35MM color slides or black and white prints, any size. Please do not send anything valuable because I cannot return it. The deadline is March 15th.

MINIZANG!

THE SUPER WHODUNIT!
JAMES COBURN
 IN DASHIELL HAMMETT'S
The DANCING

From the creator of "The Maltese Falcon," Sam Spade and "The Thin Man." A pulse-pounding six-hour mystery drama for television. Three nights of incredible suspense.

Starting tonight, America's favorite indoor sport will be untangling the riddle of the sinister family curse that destroyed all enmeshed in its spell.

Also starring: HECTOR ELIZONDO, JASON MILLER, JEAN SIMMONS, PAUL STEWART, BEATRICE STRAIGHT And introducing NANCY ADDISON as Gabrielle.

Be there when it begins.
9-11PM CBS 2

CBS Network

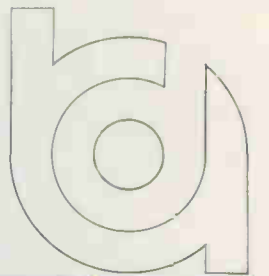
The Loneliest Disease.

Perhaps more than any other illness, alcoholism isolates its victims from those who could help. Most alcoholics can't break the pattern of hiding and deceit unless someone cares enough to step in. Tonight, in a two-part IMPACT special, you'll learn how to recognize the alcoholic, and help him re-establish contact with life.

IMPACT: The Loneliest Disease
 Tonight 10pm
 Followed at 11:30 by a viewer call-in session.

TV4
 WBZ-TV

Lou Bortone / Ernie Legee, WBZ-TV, Boston, MA



BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

Yvette Mimieux is cold, beautiful and deadly!

HIT LADY
BEST OF 4 AT 10:30PM

Milton Geis / Lee Morris, KMOX-TV, St. Louis, MO

The Magic Christian

PETER SELLERS and RINGO STARR set out to prove that everyone and everything has its price in this hilarious spoof based on a novel by Terry Southern.

2 TONIGHT 11:30

R. Scott Miller, KATU-TV, Portland, OR

HOLLYWOOD SQUARES

Thursdays
6:30 PM

5

Bringing it home to you.

Richard Roberts, KXAS-TV, Fort Worth, TX

10 STRONG
KOLN TV KGIN TV

History of the Great Plains
6:30pm
Thursday

Bob Regler, KOLN-TV, Lincoln, NE

DONAHUE
Weekdays 3:30

kcbj abc tv
COLUMBIA MISSOURI **7**

Ralph Stoner, KCBJ-TV, Columbia, MO

THE 3:30 MOVIE

CHOPPER CHASE!
It began as a normal traffic control flight. But it ended in a manhunt with life or death hanging in the balance. David Janssen stars.

BIRDS OF PREY

WEDNESDAY

Lloyd Peyton, KABC-TV, Hollywood, CA

The Caine Mutiny

Humphrey Bogart is outstanding as Capt. Queeg in this tale of modern day mutiny!

Friday 9 PM

38
WSBK-TV

David Henry / Maria LoConte, WSBK-TV, Boston, MA

4:30PM CBS SPORTS TAPED SPECTACULAR
HOSTED FROM THAILAND!

KING'S CUP INTERNATIONAL BOXING
FROM BANGKOK

GYMNASTICS INTERNATIONAL MIXED PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP

MOTORCYCLING DAYTONA 200

THAI KICK BOXING
YOU'LL SAY YOU SAW IT ON

CBS SPORTS 2

CBS Network

Jack Eaton
Part of the first team
Tonight at 5 & 10

ACTION NEWS 5

Jody Sharp, WMC-TV, Memphis, TN

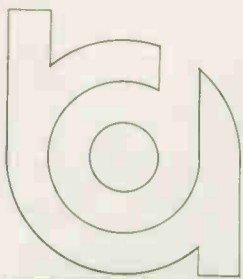
"Three Into Two Won't Go"
Rod Steiger
Claire Bloom
Judy Geeson

Teen-age beauty rocks middle-age marriage!

9:00PM IN COLOR NBC

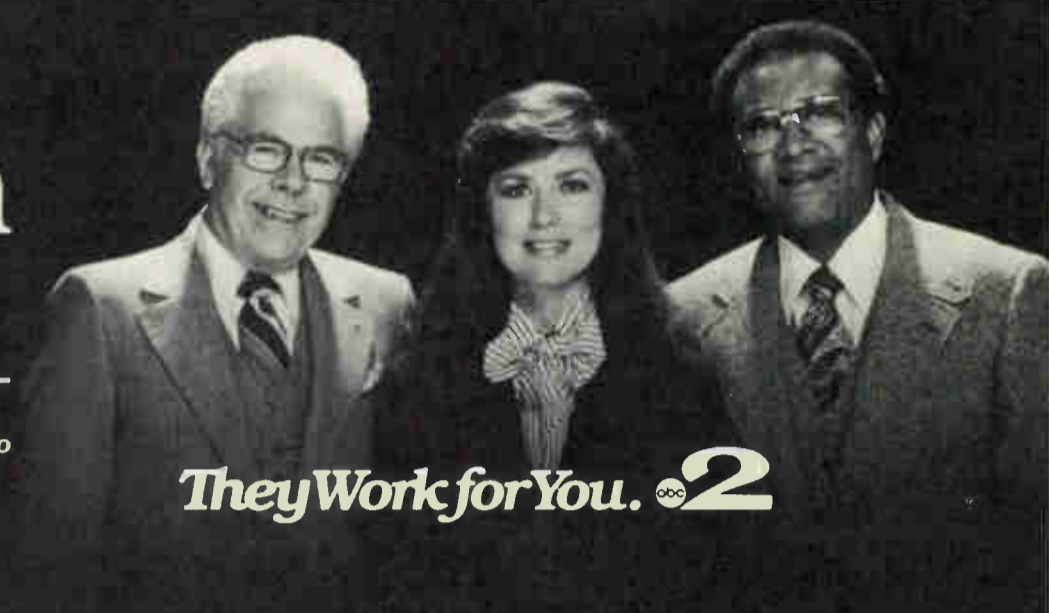
NBC Monday Night At The Movies

NBC Network



BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

Ross, Smith & Bogle



At the heart of every good newscast are the people who interpret and deliver the news—people like Richard Ross, Kathy Smith and Dick Bogle, the professional journalists of Channel Two News.

They Work for You. **2**

R. Scott Miller, KATU-TV, Portland, OR (Unusual use of a full page ad - two half pages running across double-page spread.)

Dick Martin Goes Bizarre!

Dick Martin shows off Hollywood's weirdest fashions to co-host David Brenner and Rosemary Clooney.

MIKE DOUGLAS 4:30PM **2**

Joseph Montgomery, WCBS-TV, New York, NY

newscenter 8
at 6PM

Hilton P. Murray, WJKW-TV, Cleveland, OH

ORIOLES BEDEVIL THE ANGELS

FRIDAY 2 7:30 PM

Diana Witt, WMAL-TV, Baltimore, MD

Kansas City **KINGS** Portland **TRAILBLAZERS**

9PM SUNDAY

Follow the Kings all season long on the Sports One. 4!!

41

John Sylvester, KBMA-TV, Kansas City, MI

Who killed the DUKE?

"The COWBOYS"
WITH BRUCE DERN
10:30 TONIGHT! **23** WIFR-TV

Phyllis LaVrie, WIFR-TV, Rockford, IL

There's Only One **2**

The New Centurions
A dramatic police story.
GEORGE C. SCOTT
Tonight 8PM on KTVU

Dick Weise, KTVU-TV, Oakland, CA

GREGORY PECK WEEK
POSSESSED TO KILL A MONSTER OF THE DEEP! "MOBY DICK"
FRIDAY'S 10:30 BIG MOVIE **8**

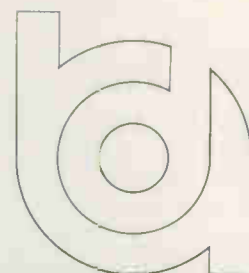
Lynda Transon, WFAA-TV, Dallas, TX

Together, we can make it!

PATS/REDSKINS
Tonight 9:00 PM

We're 4 Pats'77

Lou Bortone / Ernie Legee, WBZ-TV, Boston, MA



BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

Typography is an integral part of television graphics and strongly affects our daily work load in one way or another. Perhaps one of the most profound changes that has taken place in the entire graphics industry over the past 10 years is in the area of typography. With the advent of various photographic typesetting systems coupled with the onslaught of type rub-on products available, the type business has done a complete turn-around. It's a whole different industry today than it was several years ago and is still rapidly changing. It has affected unions, produced unemployment, and caused type companies to file bankruptcy.

Like most computers, photo typesetting equipment is becoming less expensive with each passing year. You can still buy the \$65,000. typesetting systems, of course, but you can also buy a pretty impressive and effective computerized typesetter for only \$12,500. And, who knows what next year will bring. After the initial equipment cost, material maintenance is the next consideration. Paper, chemistry and type fonts are so reasonable in relation to outside typesetting charges, that they are but a small consideration.

If you buy \$5,000. to \$8,000. worth of typesetting outside per year now, it would probably be worthwhile for you to consider putting in a computer typesetter. There are many companies producing many units. I have researched four of the more popular systems all within the \$12,500. price range. Be it known that this equipment is not meant to replace your rub-down type needs. It is basically designed for setting body copy but can be used for larger size typesetting as well. The art directors I've talked with who have this equipment in service are all, without exception, positively delighted with it and don't know how they ever accomplished their job before installing it. In terms of time saving and design flexibility, it offers incredible versatility. It goes without saying that an in-house system saves a great deal of cost outlay each year as well.

The four units I have looked into are the Itek Quadritek, the Compugraphic Editwriter 7500, the Mergenthaler Line-O-Term, and the A & M Compset 510. They are comparable in many ways yet have unique features in other ways. All simply plug into an outlet. All have typewriter-style keyboards. All but the Mergan-



Electronic Type

thaler have CRT screens which display what you're typesetting, but not in the type size or style. All can use regular photo-typesetting paper or resin coated, depending on the kind of processor you buy. The regular 2-bath processor runs about \$1,000. and the resin coated processor, which is a 4-bath job, runs approximately \$3,500.

The Itek Quadritek is by far the most compact unit. It weighs only 175 pounds (compared to the Editwriter's 575 pounds) and uses the least amount of floor space. The two main features of the Itek that I find most desirable are the ease of changing typefaces, one at a time (rather than several), and the built-in ease of editing without having to retype copy. This system comes with a cassette recording setup so that everything you typeset is recorded. This allows you to replay it, inserting corrections or changes including type styles and sizes if so desired, without having to re-keyboard the copy. None of the other units have this facility unless you spend about \$3,500. more to add the disc recording units. The Quadrifonts are pie-shaped plexiglas font units. Four of them fit onto a circular carrier which spins when activated. You can change any one or all four fonts at your discretion thereby having any four fonts of your choice on line at any one time. With any font, you can call any point size from 6 to 36. This machine is my number one

choice but keep in mind that you have to make your own decision based on your particular needs.

The Editwriter 7500 has a much better type style selection but you must buy the fonts four to a strip. The machine holds two strips (or eight fonts) on line but each time you want to change fonts, you must remove all four fonts on a strip and cannot mix and match at your discretion. The screen displays up to 13 lines at a time and allows more versatility in editing but once you send the information to the typesetter section, it's gone and cannot be recalled. The 7500 has banks of buttons on it which allow individual functions. This tends to be simpler while learning but is not especially that convenient for the "touch-typist". Type size selection works in various size-ranges which are selected when you order the machine. Quality of reproduction is excellent and paper costs are comparable to other units. The system is hardware and is limited in its capacity to be updated in the future.

The Mergenthaler unit is a large table top system. One of its good points is that the quality of reproduction is most excellent and type style selection is also excellent. However, it has several bad points. There are fourteen different type size possibilities but only four sizes available on line at any one time. If you wish to set other sizes it is necessary to un-

screw a lens and insert a different one in its place. Another setback is the display unit. It is not a CRT screen but rather a long one-line slot which shows several words that move to the left as you type. The line of type can be backed up, etc. but tends to be slower than the other units which display several lines at a time. The type fonts are excellent quality but again, four fonts on a single strip which means that the mix and match options are limited.

Finally, the Compset 510 is most like the Itek unit but much larger physically. Good font selection style-wise but, once again, four fonts on a disc. If you decided that you wanted to buy one font of type, you must buy the other three that are on the disc with it. These discs, like the other font-strips, tend to have type families on them, i.e. helvetica light, medium, bold and extra bold, etc. While any given disc is in operation you can, of course, mix your type styles, sizes and weights during the same typing session. This is true of the other units as well. This unit seems to be the most popular maybe because they are very visible via advertising in the trade journals however, in my opinion, the quality (especially in the larger sizes) leaves a lot to be desired. Once again, none of these machines offers the editing possibilities that Itek does and that becomes a major consideration once you get working with the machine. They do offer endless editing and storage abilities if the extra disc systems are added.

This has been just a very basic review and certainly not an in-depth evaluation of the equipment discussed. Obviously, if you have an interest in pursuing the purchase of a computer typesetter, I strongly recommend that you look into the various possibilities carefully and decide on a unit based on your particular needs. I will say that once you get a unit into your shop, you'll find countless ways to use it and save time and money. In round figures, most of the type fonts for the various machines run about \$100. per font. The four-font per strip series are about \$400. but companies have various font purchase deals. According to reports, most designers who have access to these units love them and feel that even though they are physically sitting down typing in the copy, they save a great deal of time and energy in the long run, not to mention taxi fares!

L.B.

Scenic Routes

In the last issue, I promised to cover the subject of "vacuum forming". In researching this method of scenery production, I also came upon some other gems which I will touch upon here and cover in more detail in later issues.

Vacuum forming is a process whereby a sheet of thermoplastic material (for the scientists among you; ABS/Acrylonitrile-Butadiene-Styrene, Cellulose Acetate, or Polyethylene) is heated to a pliable state of approximately 300 degrees F., then drawn by vacuum over a mold. A common commercial use of this simple method is blister-pak packaging. The process consists of connecting a vacuum pump to a table in which a grid of holes has been drilled. It is sometimes also necessary to drill small holes in the mold itself to insure that the plastic will be drawn firmly over the complete contour of the mold. During this operation, the plastic must be held firmly in place on a frame which can be easily transferred from the heat source to the vacuum table. The plastic cools quickly enough so that it can be removed from the mold almost immediately. It will then hold its shape until reheated. The process is relatively inexpensive and a machine with a small table size approximately 4'X4', can be built for a very affordable price. The main requirements for such a machine are a heating element capable of evenly heating a plastic sheet of the desired size; a clamping frame to hold the plastic sheet firmly; and a vacuum table of the desired size to handle the molds needed. The recommended vacuum for this process is approx 28 inches of mercury. Most vacuum forming for scenic purposes is drape-forming which consists of heated plastic being drawn down over a male mold on the vacuum table.

Vacuum forming is useful for props work where several matching pieces of hand props or furniture are required and for scenic comise pieces where there is a need for a large expanse of matching overhead work. Perhaps the most impressive scenic application of vacuum formed material is the production of large



dimensional textured wall panels such as brick, stone, weathered wood, or carved panels. Those wall treatments can be made in panels from 2'X2' up to 4'X8' depending on the size of the available forming machine. These treatments create an amazingly realistic image which can be produced very quickly and easily and provide an almost weightless alternative to z-brick and stone, etc. The forming process and one solution of building a forming machine can be found in: *Thermal Plastics, Volume 1* by Nickolas Bryson. Published by Drama Book Specialists, New York, NY. Since the printing of this book, Nick has found some bugs in the described machine but it will give the reader a beginning point.

Vacuum forming is only one of the methods of heat forming plastic. Thermoforming also includes matched mold forming, a process by which a male and female mold are forced over the heated plastic; pressure forming, which consists of straight pressure forming (the exact reverse of vacuum forming) or free blowing in which the plastic is forced through a hole in a frame clamped over the heated plastic.

Next from my bag of tricks is polyester resin. Most commonly used in connection with fiberglass sheeting material, polyester resins also have a myriad of scenic uses alone and in combination with other products. It is a thermo-setting plastic and as such, requires the addition of a catalyst (hardening agent, usually Methyl Ethyl Ketone - MEK) to cure into a final hardened state. The catalyst in each case causes a chemical reaction with the resin which creates heat and produces the curing.

The most impressive scenic use aside from its combination with fiberglass sheeting is the production of translucent mosaics. These panels are produced by placing various sizes, shapes, and colors of polyester tiles on a base sheet of acrylic and pouring clear liquid polyester resin over these tiles. The panel is then allowed to cure. The areas between the tiles can then be covered with a black opaque resin, using a standard ketchup dispenser to separate and intensify the colored tiles if so desired. These mosaic panels can be made in any size that an acrylic sheet is available. The same process can be carried out using a sheet of fiberglass material and found items, such as leaves or sea shells, to create various room divider screens designed for a specific production. These panels can be used as windows and skylights also.

Mosaics of smaller size can be produced using Fusible Thermoplastic tiles and beads (polystyrene). This process is somewhat more cumbersome because of the need for heat to fuse the material but for small pieces a standard oven works well. It may be possible to create larger pieces using a standard shop heat gun but as I have had no opportunity to test this theory, I pass it on to you as pure conjecture.

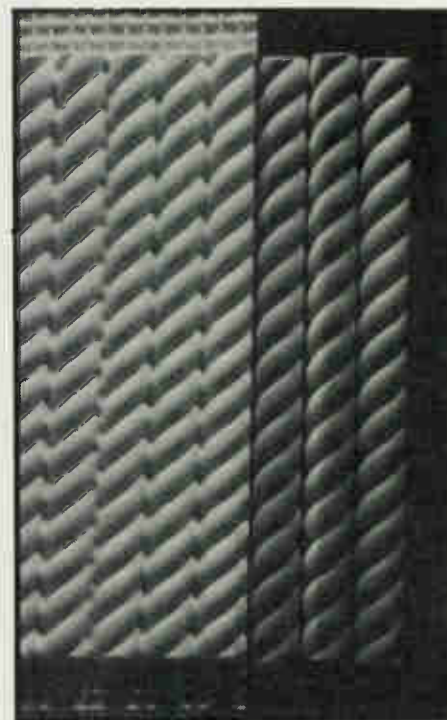
The final technique which I will deal with is the epoxy and sand panel. This is a molded panel cast on a sheet of polystyrene foam. The foam sheet is carved to produce a negative of the desired panel. The mold can be carved with a sharp knife or saw, or the material can be melted by using an electric soldering gun. A two

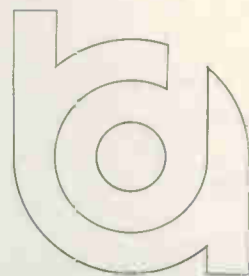
part epoxy is then mixed with about 40% sand which acts as a filler and extender for the epoxy. This mixture is forced into the prepared mold and left to harden. When fully hardened, the polystyrene foam can be removed using lacquer thinner (Adequate ventilation is a MUST) leaving the epoxy/sand panel unharmed. Again, these panels can be designed for a specific show or market.

One last tidbit for those of you who have hand tools in your shop which you would like to have insulated handles on. There is a product called Plasti-Dip which seems to be a derivative of Plasti-Sol. The product comes in a sixteen ounce can. To coat the handles of pliers, screwdrivers, etc., you first must insure that the handles are free of dirt and grease and then simply dip the handles in the product, withdraw slowly and hang to dry. The item may be recoated if a heavier coating is desired. The product is manufactured by Plasti-Dip International, 1458 West County Road C., St. Paul, MN 55113.

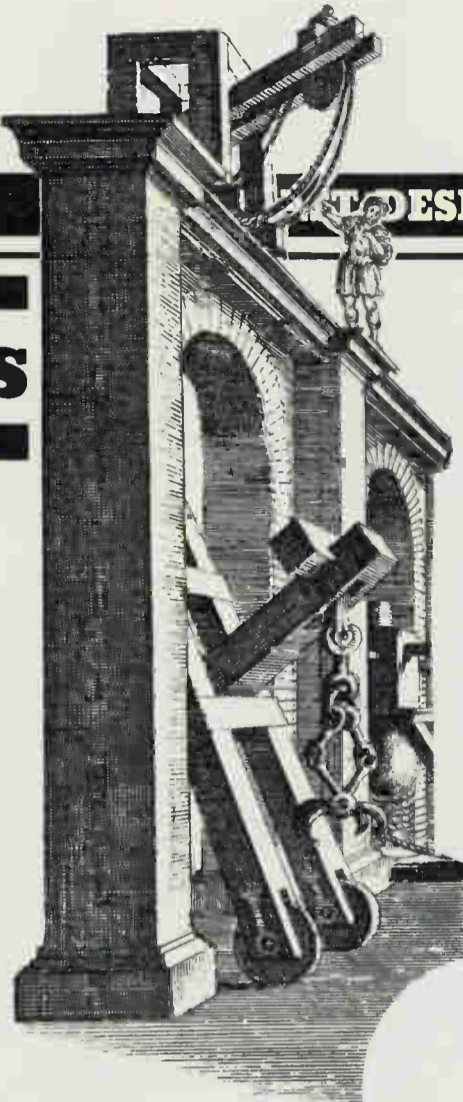
I am still waiting for a response to this column. I know that many of you out there are reading it because I keep getting calls from suppliers who have been mentioned here about how much new business they are doing as a result of it. If there is a particular material that you would like to know more about let me know and I will see what I can do to research it...anything to get you to respond! "Hello, out there...?"

Robert Rayne
WJZ-TV
3725 Malden Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21211
(301) 466-0013





BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION



Last Chance!

This, the final chapter (I hope) in the ongoing tale of the now famous "Masthead" design contest, will for once and for all produce a masthead design for this now not-so-famous contest. Here's where it's at! As you know, we do indeed need an official name and masthead for this BDA Newsletter. We have been, for over a year now, running a contest to produce that very design. We have received a total of 32 entries to date. These were copied and sent to the club officers so that they could judge the winner. It was decided that none of the designs quite made for a winner however, the judges did find a name from those entries. Hopefully, this will make life a bit simpler.

The new newsletter name will officially be "SCANLINES". Larry Viviano, past Vice President of the BDA has won and settled, at least, that part of the contest. Now, and finally, we put to you the chance to submit your masthead design entry to the "Scanlines" contest. You can use the BDA logo as part of the design or not. You can set it in caps or upper and lower case. If you decide to use screens or tones please use 85-line screen and prepare the artwork same size - 10" wide X 4" deep. Give us one more chance and submit an entry to this contest. We offer the winner fame without fortune and the warm feeling he or she will get each time their new newsletter comes to them in the mail. The offer of \$50. still goes to the winner to help defray pencil and eraser costs. Give it a shot. Work with the word Scanlines keeping in mind we're in the TV biz and this is an informational vehicle to members of the BDA. Mail your entry or entries to: Lou Bortone, WBZ-TV, 1170 Soldiers Field Rd. Boston, MA 02134. The deadline is Friday, February 29, 1980.

Some Tips

The National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE) convention is a major annual event in the broadcasting industry. This year, the conference will take place in San Francisco. A projected total attendance of 3,600 people is expected, including an increase of delegates from ad agencies and foreign broadcasters. Meetings will take place from Friday, February 15 through Thursday, February 21. As you can see, it is truly a big event. The exciting part, where the BDA is concerned, is that we have been invited to conduct a workshop entitled "Using Graphics for your Broadcast Image". This is the first year that BDA Art Directors will be making a presentation and, hopefully, will begin an annual participation series of graphic workshops. As Dick Weise points out in his President's Report, it will be mutually beneficial to both art director/designers and program management.



The Joint Ethics Committee, sponsored by several professional organizations in New York was formulated in 1948. They devised a "Code of Good Practice", which outlines 22 brief rules and was copyrighted in 1954. If you have dealings with or hire free-lance artists, designers, photographers, or other graphic professionals to help get your work done, and would like to know more about playing the game by the rules - you can obtain a copy of the Fair Practice Code pamphlet by writing to:

The Joint Ethics Committee
P. O. Box 179
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10017

We need your help! The subject is "News Set Design" and the most comprehensive book is now in the process of being compiled by the Broadcast Designers Association. We need every station's full cooperation. All art directors or designers are requested to send an 8X10 black and white photo of your news set along with a stat of your floor plan if possible. Also, supply the following information:

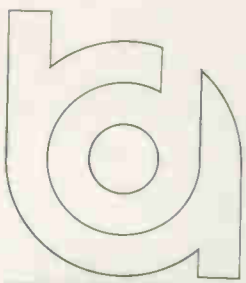
- Station call letters
- Black and white stat of your station logo.
- The names of the Set Designer and Art Director.
- Materials used and construction-materials costs.
- Man hours to construct set.
- Source for news graphics, i.e. chroma key, monitors, rear-screen, etc.
- Weather map information.
- Notes of particular interest.

The book will be printed in the spring of 1980 and will be available for a limited time at a special price to BDA members. It will also be for sale at the Montreal convention for a higher cost. This book will be used internationally as a reference and handbook for stations large and small. If you are a small market station, do not fail to respond; your ideas will be shared by stations everywhere. Mail all information immediately to: Ron Whyte, KPIX Channel 5, 2655 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94109. This is your final chance to participate and you must do it right away because we have already extended the deadline.

A couple of things that bear looking into if you would like to explore possible new ways to handle news graphics or any other use of "behind-the-talent" graphics are the following systems:

Advent front screen projection. This system incorporates a normal TV set with a three-gun color projection unit in front of it which projects the red, blue and green signals separately onto the screen creating a large (approximately 4X6 feet) picture. It's ideal for news shows because the camera shot is generally a head-on shot with talent and there is a minimum of picture distortion on the Advent screen. It is also useful on panel-type shows to display information regarding Q/A results or poll-taking results but must be lit and shot much more carefully to avoid distortion and produce clarity. If you have a serious interest in trying it out, you can rent the Advent screen and projector, which includes the TV set, for about \$250. per full day. This gives you adequate time to get your lighting and technical people involved in a studio set-up testing series, before you commit to purchase. The system costs in the vicinity of \$3,000. to \$4,000.

General Electric has available a color television projector which faithfully reproduces natural color TV pictures of high resolution and contrast from two feet to 20 feet wide on front or rear screen projection, according to GE. The system is being successfully used at WTMJ-TV in Milwaukee on their weather shows. They can insert information from any source, like slide or film projectors, videotape or live camera. According to production manager Dick Collins, "Flexibility is really the primary advantage". The system is called PJ5000 color television projector, I do not have price information but if you have an interest, call Jerrold P. Gunderson in Syracuse, New York. The phone number is (315) 456-2562 or if you would like to simply write for brochure information, the address is: Video Display Equipment Operation, General Electric Company, Home Entertainment Business Division, Electronics Park, Building 6, Room 206, Syracuse, NY 13201. Seems to me you could build your own in the time it takes to write that address!



BROADCAST DESIGN ASSOCIATION

Getting Closer.

June and Montreal will be on us before we know it. For those of you who want a head start on budget and other kinds of planning, this year's convention will be, of course, in Montreal June 11 through 14. You will soon be receiving your registration forms and information. The cost this year for both BPA and BDA members will be the same, \$165. This fee covers all workshops, a multitude of exhibits, three breakfasts, three lunches, the awards banquet, the program book, two cocktail receptions, and much more. Non-members will pay \$240. and students, \$100.

There was a slight error in our last report concerning taxes in Canada. This will straighten it out. There is a sales tax in Canada but it varies from province to province. In Quebec the sales tax is 8% on all goods except clothing and shoes which are tax free. There is no hotel tax in Montreal which means that your hotel room is a straight fee, ranging from \$49. to \$85. The tax on meals and alcoholic beverages consumed in bars and restaurants is 10% on all bills over \$3.25, so drink easy and save money! If you have any specific questions or concerns, contact: Gail Morrell, CFCF-12, 405 Ogilvy Avenue, Montreal, Quebec H3N 1M4. Phone: (514) 273-6311.

Meanwhile, here is the rundown on some exciting workshops and seminars you can look forward to:

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

BDA welcome and cocktail reception.

THURSDAY, JUNE 12

10AM - International Design Workshop-Featuring TV graphics from around the world. Speakers are Art Directors from Canada, England, and South America.
2PM - Computer Graphics Today - A full afternoon of step by step production of computer graphics techniques and procedures presented by Computer Image Co. of Denver Colorado and Station CFCF, Montreal.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13

10AM - What's New in News Sets - Two expert set designers



from both the east and west coasts show and discuss news sets from around the country.

2PM - The Best of TV Guide - TV Station and TV Guide Art Directors discuss ways to improve your TV Guide ads both design wise and technically.

4PM - A Design Symposium - George Lois, one of the nation's top designers, will discuss TV design and you. This will be a definite convention highlight!

SATURDAY, JUNE 14

9AM - General BPA/BDA Session - Bucky Biggers, Executive Vice President and Michael Mohamad, Vice President, Advertising and Design, both of NBC, discuss Promotion and Design in tomorrow's television.

10AM - Creative Photography in Television - Two industry experts show and discuss the techniques and equipment in making creative photographs and slides for television.

1PM - The Modern TV Art Department - A demonstration of the latest in supplies, hardware, and equipment needed in today's art department.

3PM - BDA General Business Meeting - Board of Directors Election, treasurer's report and discussion of BDA goals and objec-

tives.

6PM - Awards Banquet - Winners of the 1979 BPA/BDA Competition will be shown and awarded at a festive banquet.

This is a BPA/BDA Seminar truly packed with super sessions and workshops. The Internationally known Queen Elizabeth Hotel is the location, in the heart of downtown Montreal. And, the word is that everyone will be staying in the same hotel this year. No bussing!

Looking to the future, here is a list of locations for upcoming seminars:

1981 - NEW YORK CITY

The broadcast center of the USA will host BPA's Silver Anniversary.

1982 - SAN FRANCISCO

Cable cars! The Golden Gate Bridge! Chinatown! One of the world's most beautiful cities brings the seminar back to the west coast

1983 - NEW ORLEANS

Bourbon Street and a touch of the city's multi-national flavored Southern Hospitality.

1984 - LAS VAGAS

The excitement of one of America's glittering and most fabled cities.

So...**"COME ON UP"** to wonderful Montreal this June.

The way I see it...

This is the fourth edition of our BDA Newsletter. I hope there will be many more. We have had tremendous national response to it and many people in the broadcasting industry would love a subscription. It's chock full of good and useful information that directly appeals to television designers specifically, and to many other TV professionals as well. So far, so good. Everything seems cool!

However, there is definitely one major problem. In my opinion, almost everything stated in the newsletter is...in my opinion! And, that is the problem. I'm one art director at one station in one market. My thoughts, ideas and experiences have been molded by this one career at one station in one city. It is just not healthy or serviceable to the BDA membership to hear it from one source all the time. The idea of this

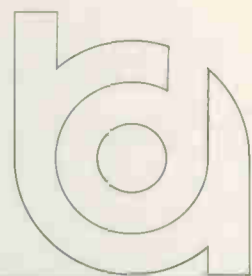
communications vehicle we call newsletter is to share our thoughts, ideas and experiences with each other. Aside from the President's Report, the Scenic Routes column, the back-page profiles and an occasional contributing writer, it's a one man dog and pony show!

Write to us about your art department. How many people do you have? What do they do and what kind of equipment do they use to do it? Tell us how you get your graphics on the air. Art cards? Thirty five millimeter slides? Who makes them? Do you have a staff photographer? When you design a set, do you make a model of it or just color sketches? Who approves it? How do you like working with your promotion department doing TV Guide ads? Do you do animation? In house or send it out? How? To whom? What does your station logo look like? Send us a copy. Did you design it or are you just making the best of someone else's design? Where do you think TV graphics is going in the future? Do you get to work with any of the technical equipment at your station? Write to us. We're dying to know more

about you and what you think. You don't even have to be profound...ordinary will do just fine! Share. Send us pictures of television design things. Tell us how you did them and how much they cost. Seen any good new art supplies lately? What are they and how can they save us time?

For our sake (or even for heaven's sake), start the new year off right and spread the word. Send your thoughts and pictures to: Lou Bortone, WBZ-TV, 1170 Soldiers Field Road, Boston, MA 02134 by the end of February latest. Thank you. I appreciate it.



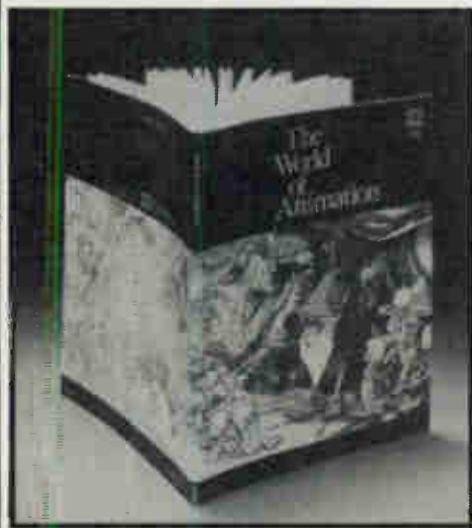


GRAPHIC DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

Did you know?

Another entry from 3M company. They feature a cold-mounting system pictured here. It requires no heat or electricity. The machine is a simple manual two-roller press capable of handling items to be mounted up to 20" wide. The system is clean, fast and easy. The adhesive is paper backed and comes in a roll. Cut a piece from the roll to the approximate size of the item being mounted then transfer the adhesive to the back of the item by passing through the rollers. Position the item on a backing board, then pass these through the rollers and viola, you're done. One of the attractions of this system is that it will cleanly and permanently mount photos, resin-coated prints, Cibachromes, posters, lithos, and more without fear of air bubbles or discoloration due to heat. It also could be the needed replacement for spray-glue! Check your local art supply dealer or 3M dealer for a demo. It sells for \$249. and a roll of 16"X50' adhesive is \$25.80.

For those of you who are interested in animation, there is a new Kodak publication called "The World of Animation" (S-35). It covers various animation techniques including photographic, three-dimensional, cel animation and computer. A unique feature of the book is a section that has plans for building an economical animation stand, making it possible for those with high interest but a low budget, to pursue projects. A 152-page book, it is priced at \$7.95 and is available from Kodak dealers or directly from Eastman Kodak Company, Dept. 454, 343 State Street, Rochester, NY 14650.



Kenro's 812 Camera for making Polaroid 8X10 color prints in 60 seconds.

For those of you who have a Polaroid MP4 (Multi-Purpose) camera and stand in your graphics department, I came across something terribly exciting for a very reasonable cost. It is a means of producing 8X10 Polaroid prints in color from 35mm slides or reflective copy as quickly as you can make a 4X5 Polaroid color print now...just 60 seconds! Here's what you need. A Kenro #812 Camera which replaces the MP4 camera on the same stand and uses the MP4 lens system. (You can change back to your 4X5 camera in less than 2 minutes.) You need a Polaroid 8X10 film holder and processor. No chemistry to mix, no trays or sinks to clean up, all operations done in daylight. The results are unbelievable. Instant 8X10 color prints with excellent color and quality in just 60 seconds. The cost: Kenro #812 Camera retails for \$825. The Polaroid 8X10 Film Holder is \$52. and the Polaroid processor is \$550. The 8X10 Polaroid film costs \$54. for a box of 10 sheets, which is only \$5.40 per picture. Add it all up and you're in the picture business for \$1,481. If you have even the remotest interest in this, call your camera and film supplier for a demo. The Kenro is fairly new so if your local photo dealer can't help you, call Lexington Technical Associates in Brookline, Mass. at (617) 7311828 and ask for Dick McCart.

And, while we're on the subject of Polaroid, look into this new camera by Polaroid. It's the new Model 600SE. It is strictly a

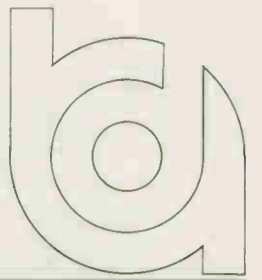
professional camera, not a family toy. The cost is about \$550. with its normal lens, a Mamiya 127mm f/4.7, 4 element. It's a 3X4 format and uses Polaroid color film 668 or black and white film 667. Two other lenses are also available, a 75mm wide angle and a 150mm telephoto. The resulting pictures are superb.

Forever on the lookout for new and inexpensive ways to set type because television's hunger for typeset information is never ending. Visual Graphics Corporation, the creator of the Typositor which sells for close to \$4,000. has created a new and simple machine called the "Typeprinter 20" which sells for a more reasonable \$425. From what I can see, VGC does not handle the sales end, they merchandise it through local art supply houses and dealers. It is said to work in subdued room light, no darkroom required. The supplies necessary are small packages of 2"X12" strips of photo-sensitive paper and chemistry. It is a contact-print process from see-through type fonts. It enjoys visual spacing rather than mechanical and develops quickly. There are no type size variations per font but if you are using the system for one project, like news graphics, it may be serviceable. The dealer boasts extremely sharp-edge reproduction. Available in Boston from E.J. Ardon Company, 176 Brookline Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. Phone: (617) 536-5120. Or, check your trade magazines for ads.

Here's an interesting item for the type-nuts out there. It is a system which modifies plain typography or illustration and restyles it into several varieties of itself. Outlines, contours, shadows, air-brushed, neon effects and many other variations as shown. It's called "Graphics Modifier", is a table-top unit 30"X40" requiring 110 volt outlet and a darkroom or specially prepared area and costs just under \$3,000. If you do any amount of handlettering for drop shadow, outline or other effects, this could be a time and money saver for you. In its simplest form, attach a film negative of your type to the film carriage. Place a sheet of unexposed film to the film board. Adjust dials (for effect desired, i.e. outline, shadow, etc.). Expose and develop the finished product. It is said to take 15 to 30 minutes to completion. As you can see, the finished results are pretty exciting. If you can't afford a set-up for you art department, talk your outside typesetter into getting one so that you can buy the service from him! For samples and a brochure, write to Byers Corporation, Box 26624, Oklahoma City, OK 73126, or call direct: (405) 235-0572.

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BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION



Michael Mohamad

It's emblazoned on the back of his royal blue velour robe. It's kept him awake nights. It once arrived in the surprising shape of a -- would you believe -- roman candle. And it perches, in novelty neon, over his right shoulder against a many windowed Rockefeller Center office wall.

It's the fabled NBC Peacock. And its designer, Michael Mohamad. Thirty-four-year-old vice presidential graphics whiz who has restored the dozing logo to a now vibrant reality.

"I'm afraid you can only call me the re-designer", chuckles Mohamad, who modestly admits, "the original peacock was created with such pizzazz, it was hard to beat. I started playing with it, oversimplified it, and spent hours and hours searching for a modern peacock. Even tossed and turned in the wee hours of the morning. First and foremost I knew it had to signal "entertainment" -- immediately. A symbol has to register quickly; a viewer shouldn't spend time working on it. It must be designed so colors are adaptable; obviously, on air it's employed in one way, in print, another. On air I try to achieve a dimension to it by a powerful rainbow of integrated color. But the basic design is maintained in both".

"NBC has an important history. Over the years it's meant many things to many people. And the peacock is part of our tradition. I'm delighted that the return of my feathered friend has generated all this excitement inside and outside

the industry. I have a busy staff of about three dozen people and hardly a day goes by when somebody doesn't comment on the fact that the always-talked-about peacock is, well, here to stay. It is, I might add, thanks to Fred Silverman, who advised the advertising staff some time ago that when the time was right, the peacock would fly into our lives again. Our symbol is one of the most recognized in America."

On the NBC staff for eleven years, Chicago-born Mohamad currently wears a variety of plumed hats. He's V.P. Advertising as well as V.P. Design, responsible for on-air design and print copy and design as well. Which includes radio, news, sports, tune-in, made-for-TV-movies, affiliates' and owned-and-operated advertising. "Even once in a while", he adds, "we design for the local station." He frowns, "in fact, there is so much responsibility that often I get blamed for something peacock-y I had nothing to do with."

"A designer is privileged in working at NBC, specifically, and in television, in general", he continues, "there is the natural excitement of the pace and ever-increasing freedom of creativity in the industry as a whole. For instance, in any given day I can work on a radio print ad, a sales design piece, on-air animation, or a design for a truck or remote unit. It's in essence a designer's dream - to be allowed to sit down and do what one wants to do. But it

doesn't come easy. You have to make split-second decisions and must communicate to others with speed and efficiency. We're in a highly competitive business. It requires long hours of commitment to the company, exceedingly long days. And, the ability to look at other people's work and say to a designer, "I would not have done it the same way but you have met the criteria well."

Mohamad calls on-air design 'motion graphics.' "We've moved at a highly rapid pace in this field", he concedes, "certainly we've improved what was being produced ten years ago. The only fault I can see today is the duplicity everywhere. Instead of inventing innovative techniques and styles, often designers jump on the same bandwagon. That's disturbing. Because design then becomes short-lived. Good design should never be abandoned. And a smart designer must respect the written word and appreciate its contribution to design."

Schooling was the singularly most creative influence in Mohamad's life. While at Winthrop Junior High School in Brooklyn, a buddy pleaded for Michael to accompany him to the High School of Art and Design in Manhattan. "I wasn't eager at first", muses Mohamad, "I dreaded the long commute. But I had a persuasive friend. And he had a way of manipulating my own father who appeared dead set against it. My father was a man who understood labor, trades. He was Palestinian, born on the West Bank, and married a Lebanese woman from Canada. We had simple lives. I was the next to youngest of four boys and three girls. I suppose when all was said and done my family would have preferred me to continue in their tradition, which is understandable, but once I was in High School I got the bug. Encouraged by my teachers I worked hard. After graduation I went on to N.Y.C. Community College. Then landed my first job in graphics while attending Brooklyn College at night. I eventually went on to Cosmopolitan Magazine and various agencies. When I came to NBC I became particularly intrigued by on-air graphics, what I termed 'motion graphics.' So I spent weekends hanging around the on-air operation. Nobody else seemed to care much about it at the time. And I learned not only design but, more importantly, advertising. My first film assign-

ment, "The nicest things this Fall on NBC", 10 years ago, was too soft-sell according to management. In my enthusiasm I missed the point. It taught me a lesson."

Spare time is not a phrase Mohamad uses often. Years ago he taught a Motion Graphics course at Pratt but now his rare hours not spent at office or home with his wife and two children are devoted to the local schoolboard. "I actually got elected Vice-President", he acknowledges, "and helped by a "Jews For Mohamad" movement in my local district, a mixed ethnic neighborhood. I care deeply about education."

"I had a tough time at the beginning of my career -- it was difficult for me to convince people if I could design an editorial spread that I could do a print ad for television. So I am very sympathetic to everyone who comes for advice, to show me his or her work. First and foremost, I look for good taste. And when asked for advice, all I can think of is to say feel free, to try everything imaginatively, and to always strive for originality. If our medium is appealing to designers on any level they'll keep trying to break into the broadcast field. But they must keep in mind the drawbacks as well as the perks. Those long demanding hours and the inevitable pressure. And balance that reality against the excitement of the present and the possibilities of the future in a field bursting with innovation and challenge."

With these hurried words of wisdom, Michael Mohamad dashes off to another meeting, conceivably another crises, and most definitely another peacock.

He is, at that moment, living graphics in motion.

*Leslie Rubinstein
Director, Editorial Services-Print
NBC Advertising & Promotion*

