

A Video Pack Rat...

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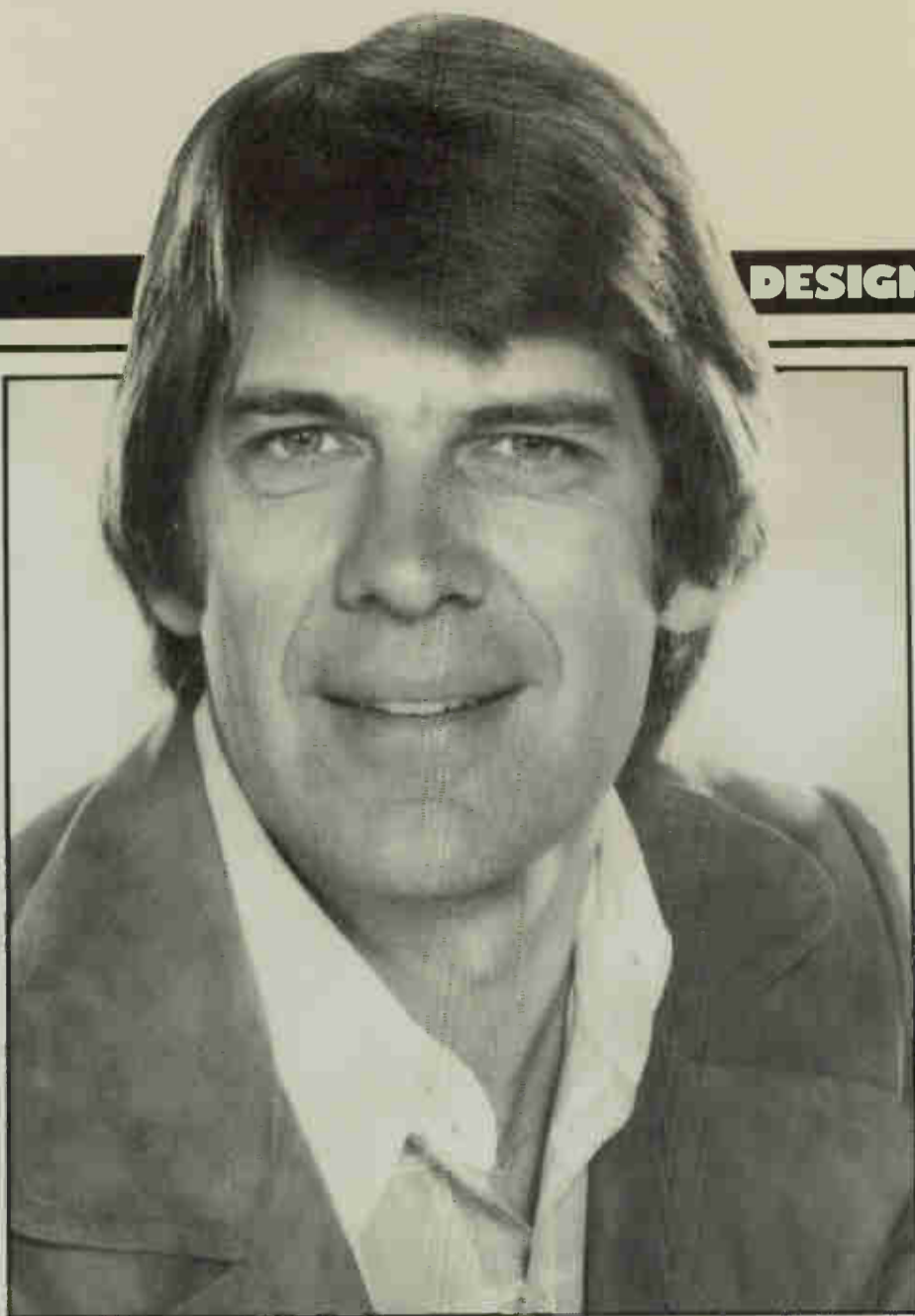


DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

You have probably seen the name "Rene Lagler" on one of many network television shows. That's because Rene is one of the busiest set designers in Hollywood. I managed to catch him by phone on the set at NBC in Hollywood. No easy task, as he often spends 60 to 70 hours a week at his job.

Rene was born in Zurich, Switzerland but later attended high school in the United States and graduated from the College of Design in Los Angeles. Following graduation, he took his portfolio to E. Jay Krause Associates where he was promptly hired and assigned to a museum display project. Following that job he worked on another project, a set for a television show. It was the "Bob Hope Show". During his four year tenure at Krause Associates, Rene worked on over 300 television shows and specials. Although his background and training was in design he said he aquired the architectural and set construction knowledge through "osmosis" and by reading and just plain doing. He feels the most important training, though, is observation. "Wherever you go," he says, "in an office or restaurant, look at all the little details of the room and file them away in your mind for future use."

After four years with Krause, Rene decided to make it on his own. His first art directing job was for the Glen Campbell Show. That was in 1968. Since that time, Rene has designed and art directed hundreds of shows including: The



Rene Lagler, one of the busiest set designers in Hollywood.

something that's never been done before' . . . that's when I get up and walk out!" says Rene.

Occasionally, and if time permits, Rene makes a simple quarter inch scale model of his design. "It's very helpful for producers and directors to better visualize", he says.

When dressing a set, Rene tries to envision the personality of the people in the setting and he adds all the little personal touches that those people might place in a room themselves.

Designing sets for television has become more difficult in the last few years, according to Rene. Primarily, because of budgetry considerations. Ten years ago, for example, Glen Campbell spent \$10,000 per week on sets. A comparable show today has about the same budget but obviously, one gets about half the set for the same price. The set that cost \$2,000 just five years ago, costs closer to \$5,000 today.

Rene admits to occasionally getting the same feeling that comes over most Art Directors: that he would like to try something else. But, he knows he won't. Rene, like most TV Art Directors, puts a great deal of time and energy into his work. That's why he had to smile when he recently saw a sign back stage that read: "If you think the dead don't come alive, you should be here at quitting time!"

We can all relate to that!

Dick Weise, Art Director
KTVU-TV, Oakland

Lagler is all Set!

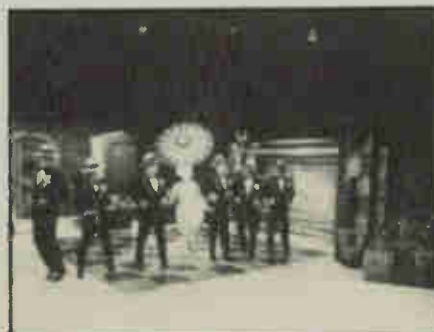
Dolly Parton Show, Dinah!, Tony Orlando and Dawn, the Toni Tennille Show, Mary Tyler Moore Hour, plus many specials such as The Emmy and Grammy Awards, Andy Williams Christmas Special, George Burns Special, Cheryl Ladd and Donna Summers Specials. And once, he even designed a news set for KABC-TV in

Los Angeles.

Rene works much like most other art directors. His work begins with the standard production meeting. There, he absorbs all the input and then works over numerous floor plans until he feels he has a workable solution. "However, if the first thing the producer or director says is, 'I want



Some samples of Rene Lagler's Design work. Above: A segment of the Cheryl Ladd Special. Right: the logo for an Elvis Special.



Barbara Eden Special



Donna Summers Special

SPRING, 1981

NEWSLETTER

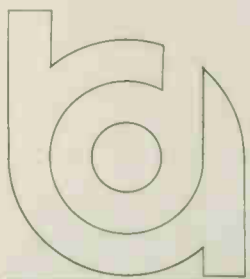
SOCCAN BUSINESS

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BROADCAST DESIGNER

grapy is precisely positionable and never crooked on the screen, i.e. running uphill or downhill. The second major disadvantage is the access time to the Chyron, (mostly news), recall of displays for scheduled commercial or other events is unrealistic.

However, by combining the video source information, which may be from slide, videotape or live camera, with Chyron displays; the composite may be recorded on a digital still-store device. When the still-store is properly interfaced with the in-house operation, the composite may be recalled for air use at any time. This method of operation would be an invaluable source and resource for news support graphics. Aside from eliminating the "dirty slide" problem, the real advantage would be immediate access to images from videotape without the delays caused by photography.

This frame-grab process is possible by having access to news field tapes. Stills may be lifted directly from the story to be manipulated into the current graphics format. Thus, the support graphics could have a direct relationship to the actual event. This method may also be used to build a "head shot" library from a variety of sources, including network news and satellite feeds.

The technology of digital still-store was first made available by Ampex at the 1976 National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention. However, with an introductory price tag of approximately \$750,000, it was not an immediate sales success! Today, there are five or six different companies offering still-store devices. There were two drawbacks in the early units offered to broadcasters. First was the prob-



Tom Cloyd, author of this article, is a staff designer at KYW-TV in Philadelphia. The photo illustration of Tom was created by his fellow designer, Jerry Lyons.

lem of indexing or inventory control. With all of those stills in the unit, how would you find the one you want? The second problem encountered was the computer interface. Most of the television facilities today rely on a computer system of one kind or another for daily operation. So the problem was how to merge this new video source into the existing house system so that a commercial "slide" could be automatically recalled for air playback.

The response of the manufacturers surfaced at the 1980 NAB convention. Almost all of the still-store suppliers had added a new "Front End System" to their existing units. There was, however, one newcomer to enter the field. MCI/Quantel introduced the

DLS6000. They have apparently taken a little more time to evaluate the end use of the stored materials. The resulting product seems to offer some rather distinct advantages.

1. Frame Manipulation

Images may be repositioned on the screen to accommodate existing or new graphic formats. If, for example, a single close-up of one person is needed for a news story and the existing video is a two shot, the image may be enlarged to eliminate the unwanted portion of the video. Borders may also be added to the image at this time.

2. Browse Mode

This feature displays 25 different stored images at one time. If that isn't enough, it will scroll past even more on the screen. The designer

can then review all the composites for a complete news show at one time. Further software development in this area could prove to be very interesting.

3. Composite Video

The unit is capable of keying Chyron information over a displayed stored image and recording the composite of the two sources into a new display.

4. On-air Transition

After the image has been sized, positioned, chyron and border added, the next composite image may be called up and changed on the air. This transition may be a simple cut, a programmable dissolve, or even a wipe.

All of these functions may be accomplished within the unit itself without going through a studio video switcher. This feature alone would save a great deal of pre-production and chyron access time for the daily news operation.

The Bottom Line . . .

The cost of the unit with one disc drive is \$90,000 with additional disc drives costing \$4,500 each. Storage capacity is 340 frames per disc.

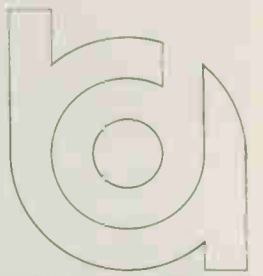
It is interesting to note that some users of still-store are currently beating the high cost of massive storage by using a one inch videotape machine for "raw images" and transferring them to still-store for composite use.

If, per chance, you would like more information, contact Micro Consultants, Inc., P.O. Box 50810 Palo Alto, CA 94303. Phone: (415) 856-6226.

Tom Cloyd, Staff Designer,
KYW-TV, Philadelphia



Pictured above is the MCI/Quantel, Model DLS-6000 Still Store, with a simple disc drive. The photo montage on the front page illustrates the "Browse Mode" feature which displays 25 different stored images on the screen at one time. Photo montage by Jerry Lyons and Tom Cloyd.



DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

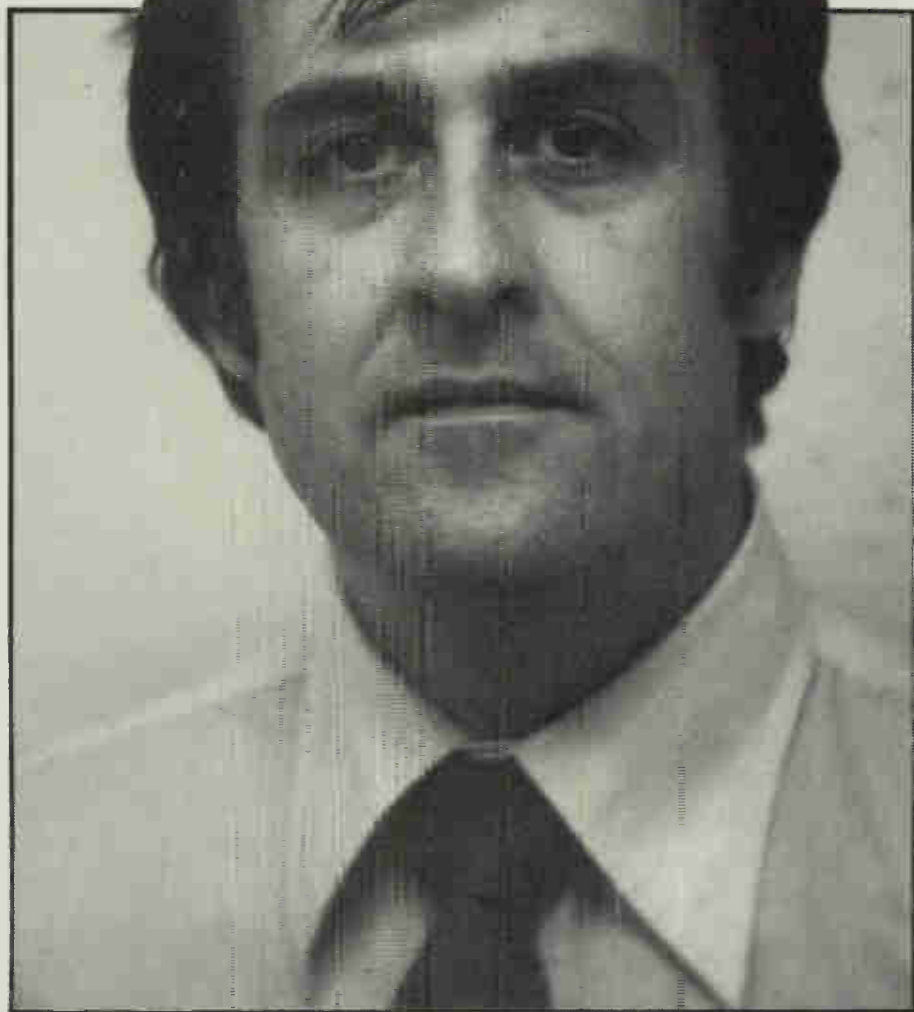
I am happy to report that the three major projects of our organization are all currently in high gear.

Our book, "Designing for Television: News Graphics", is in the culling stage. Under the expert guidance of Hilton Murray of WJKW-TV and his Cleveland based team, our second in a series will be ready for a June distribution. It is your Board's intention to publish and update each year, a book that will culminate in the most complete source available anywhere on our craft. Due to the high costs of printing, only 1,000 copies will be produced. These will be sold first to convention attendees, member advance orders and then non-members. These books will not only be our reference library, but may well become collector's items. Only a few copies of our first book on news sets are still available. Call Mona Regler at our BDA office now if you would like to purchase one.

The call for entries for our **Third Annual Design Competition** should be in your mail box any day now. Jack Fleshig of WXYZ-TV, promises a knock-out poster design that you'll be proud to display. His Detroit committee reminds us that this is your contest and good design is found in every market, no matter how big or small. A good design does not know how many people are watching it! It is the inspiration and uniqueness of the design that we seek to acknowledge and reward. Through this competition, we will help promote and encourage the creative integrity and excellence withing our medium.

The 1980 design certificates should all be distributed by now. The people receiving these recognitions will know it was well worth waiting for. Jim Stringer's San Francisco committee did a terrific job for us. They are now in the midst of producing our joint BPA/BDA awards book which should be out next month.

Are you ready for our **1981 New York Convention?** It's going to be tough to top Steve Yuranyi's smooth running Montreal seminar, but let me whet your appetite for the Big Apple... Lou Dorfsman, for Thirty Years... The Best of CBS. Lou, the energetic mentor of our field, would be worth coming to hear even if nothing else was planned. Also in the offing will be workshops on news graphics, animation, the best



Gil Cowley, BDA President and Art Director at WCBS-TV in New York.

President's Report

of designing for public television and the problems and solution of the small art department. We will expand your scenic horizons on how sets are designed and produced in New York. It won't all be show and tell. We will have a workshop that will help you sharpen your management and financial skills. This year's design symposium will be conducted by Tom Carnase, an internationally known designer and typographer, who will help us open our minds and our eyes to the entire world of design possibilities. We are also organizing field trips to various animation houses, design studios, typographers, and more.

In addition to the workshops and tours, will be the exhibitors, the hospitality suites with the comraderie and idea exchange from your fellow designers. An exciting four days, so mark your calendars now for June 10-13 at the Waldorf Astoria.

To promote and publicize our craft is one of your Board's major functions. We have sent out questionnaires to all members just before Christmas which will help

in this endeavor by finding out our status and structure. Most of these are in. If you haven't sent yours, please do it now. We want the most complete picture of our jobs as possible. A quick scan appears to confirm most of our suspicions that we are underpaid, though this seems to have improved over our first informal survey that was taken by Dick Weise about three years ago, and - that we do our jobs because of the creative variety. One person checked the box that his job was full time and then added... "and then some!"

As a reminder, our employment service under the direction of Al Medoro and Jill Kremer, both of KABC-TV in Los Angeles, is an ongoing operation. If you want to improve your position or locate good designers to hire, give them a call.

The Broadcast Designers Association is your organization. Your Board is working hard for you, but it is up to you to get involved.

I hope to see you all in New York this June!

Gil Cowley
President, BDA



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BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

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 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.

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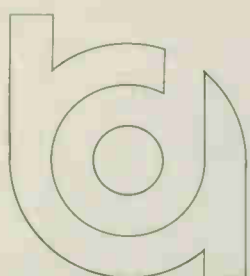
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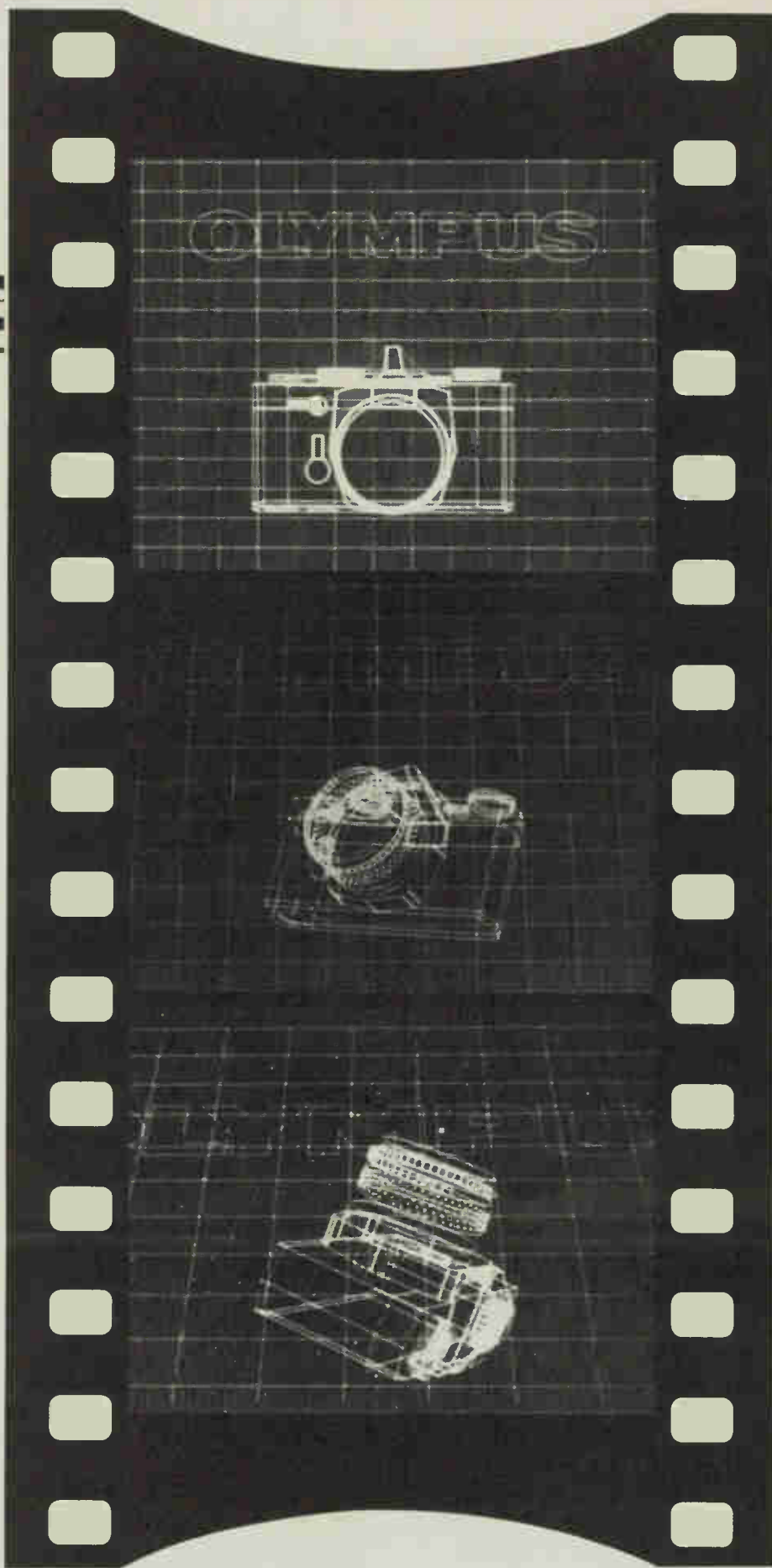


BROADCAST DESIGN

Animation... where do we begin? The industry is going crazy, and there is yet more to come! There are so many kinds of animation. There are so many places to buy it. There are so many ways to do it. Even the experts are still only scratching the surface in the area of computer generated animation.

First of all, allow me to clarify some terms that we often hear relating to computers. The words hardware and software. In simple layman's terms - hardware is usually the physical machinery used. And, software is generally the programs, or instructions, that are used to make that machinery work. Another term that is often misused and misunderstood is "computer animation". There are several kinds. One of the simpler methods of the computer's use is to be electrically connected to a manually operated animation camera/stand in order to mechanically assist in the control of the movements. This is really *not* computer animation in the true sense of the phrase. It is standard film animation that has been computer assisted. Next, we move onto the real computer animation, or computer-imagery, as it is sometimes called. The two basic kinds are Analog and Digital. In the very simplest terms, analog is image processing - you must begin with a graphic, be it artwork, photo or film. Digital is image generating - it creates the image on a cathode ray tube. The subject is obviously far more complex but, for our purposes here, we will deal with the three basic kinds of animation described.

We have invited three New York animation production companies to write brief articles describing



All graphics on this page were created by Digital Effects. Above: View from Olympus. Client: Olympus. Agency: S,S.C&B, New York.

Looking Around

something about their method of animation and to show some of their results in the form of story board frames. It is not our intent to point out any particular method as being the best or most economical. These are your decisions. It is our intent, however, to share with you the various approaches to using animation to its best advantage for your purposes. These, too, are your decisions.

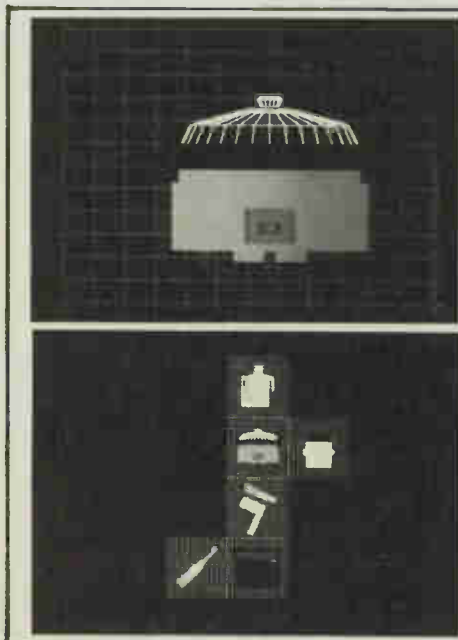
Digital Effects is, obviously, the production house that produces their product by way of "digital" animation. The graphics are totally video created and introduced onto an extremely high-resolution CRT screen. Commercial TV is 565 scanlines from top to bottom of your TV screen. The CRT that Digital produces their graphics on is approximately 1400 lines deep, three times sharper. The graphics are then shot onto 35mm film by a fixed camera in front of the screen, which produces their final product.

Dolphin productions produces their animation from ready made graphics, photo, and/or film. The information is then manipulated, by way of the analog computer method, and the final result is on videotape.

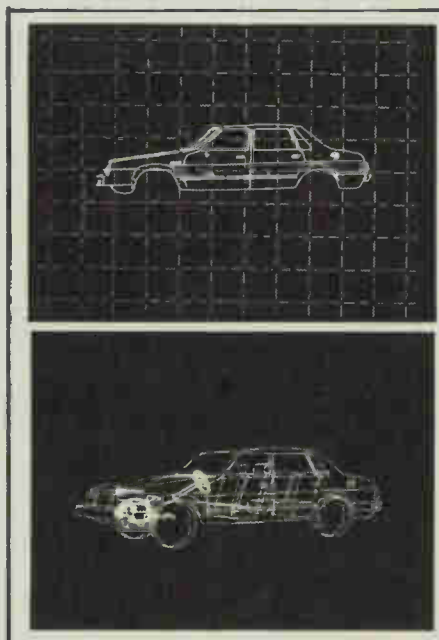
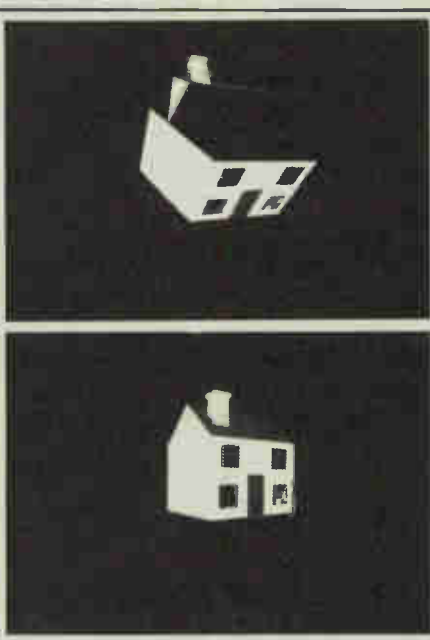
IF Studios creates their animation by way of an animation camera/stand, using 35mm film. The tedious and totally controlled movements of the camera, stand, and/or artwork, which used to be done manually and very patiently, are now done incredibly faster and more accurately by way of computer-controlled movements. The final product is 35mm film.

It should be noted that the end result of all three methods are of the highest professional quality - none suffers or loses by their method of production.

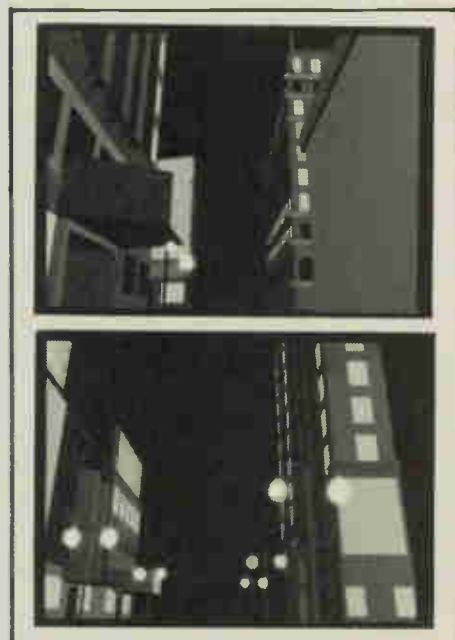
Lou Bortone



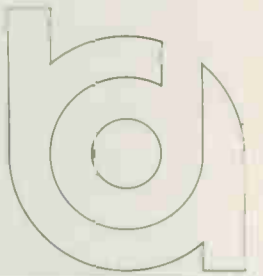
Some representational frames from a film called Christmas Package. Client: Pitco, Inc., England. Agency: T, BW, A London.



Subaru Blueprint. Client: Subaru. Agency: Levine, Huntley, Schmidt, Plaper & Beaver.



Times Square. Client: Randal Kleiser/Columbia Pictures.



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CASTERS ASSOCIATION

Digital

Vector, raster, high-res, pixel-wiped, algorithmic! The techno-jargon that attempts to define computer graphics is as burgeoning as the technology behind it. And, knowing the jargon, is part of the fundamentals of understanding any technical area.

However, design is an artistic endeavor. It is not requisite that you understand the words at the beginning of this column, to produce a graphic that requires highly technical methods like digitally generated animation. It is the intention of this article to make you more comfortable with the graphic abilities of digital imaging.

Computers were first introduced into commercial film production as controllers of camera stands and optical benches in about 1970. Concurrently, analog computer animation, (most notably the Scanimate system), was hitting the streets. This method mixes any image's video signal with any other signal, thereby changing the image. One must shoot something that looks like a car to end up with something that looks like a car though the car might be stretched, or shrunk or duplicated many times.

With the emergence of digitally generated imaging in the late seventies, we can see an interesting overall evolution of graphic methods. First, computers were attached to control-mechanisms on camera stands and optical benches. Then, the "image" was manipulated rather than the "shooting system". And now, with digital methods, designers can actually work the machinery which generates the imagery. This gives one control over the final animation as only cel-animators have known, yet all of the inking, drawing, shading, and inbetweening is done electronically.

With the proper programming, the computer is a master of perspective animation - even of three dimensional images appearing to move through space. A translucent object can become opaque, metallic or even mirror-like. A light source can be simulated to shade an object and/or throw that object's shadow. These features combine with others for a very compelling three-dimensional look. This methodology also

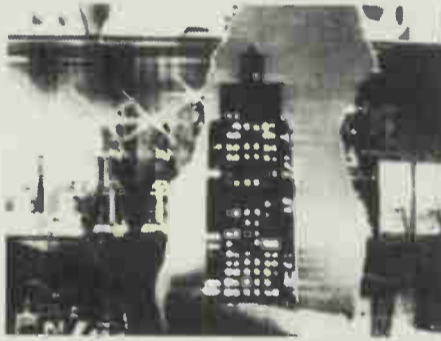
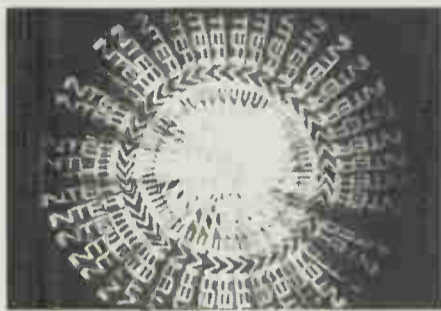
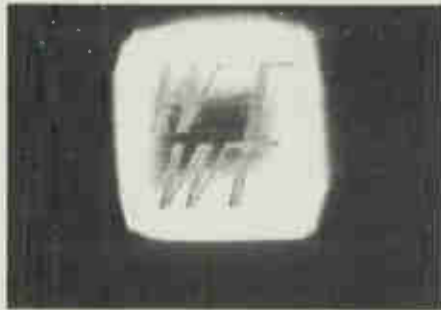
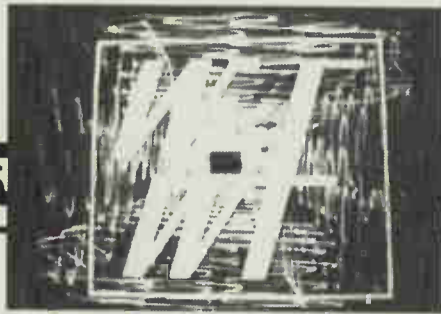
allows for mattes to be generated from any of the objects that have been animated by simply shooting high-contrast film and a different color table. This facilitates the combination of digitally-generated film elements and optical effects.

How does one get the imagery into the computer in the first place? One method is the digitizing tablet and magnetic pen which allow the artist to trace or draw any flat art. Another method is to enter the dimensions of an object relative to three dimensional axes. A third way to digitally describe an object is with mathematical functions. Each of these methods of modeling has its advantages, although these concerns are for the production house.

In moving these objects around we can again rely on a strength of computers: their mathematical ability. If active snowfall is required, one simply inputs the formulas for gravity, atmospheric drag and perhaps an allowance for viewpoint movement through the snow. At this juncture the only limit to what can be graphically described by digital techniques lies in the skill of the animator-programmer. And this skill is elusive and varies among animators and production houses, as would be expected.

Image quality is another reason to consider digital animation. There is no degradation of imagery as it is worked and reworked, because it is stored in numeric form (involving vast arrays of numbers) until it is transferred to film or tape. The primary output of Digital Effects, Inc. is 35mm film and our film recorder has a resolution greater than that of the film itself. If a loss of resolution is desirable, it can be achieved too. This is essentially what is done in pixel blocking images - breaking them up into square areas.

Digital animation is not inexpensive though. A ten second logo might cost anywhere from \$3,000 to \$30,000. So, maybe you're thinking, "Well, it would be nice to do something with that fancy stuff, but how do I know what I'll get?" Again, it varies from house to house but here's a general production scheme as we carry it through: 1) Pencil test - a line rendering of your images as they animate. 2) Color key frames to exactly establish the rendered quality or the look. Colors are electronically mixed on our video-palette choosing from a possible 17,800,000 colors. Once color,



All graphics on this page were created by Dolphin Productions. Top: KOLN, Germany. Center: Saturday Night Live. Right: Corisa, Switzerland.

shape and motion have been reworked to specifications, the overall image description and control programs are submitted to the computer for the "big crunch". The number of calculations is enormous but that's what computers are for. So, don't be put off by the computers and other machinery. They just bring your imagination and the final piece closer together!

Chris Wood
Digital Effects, Inc., NY

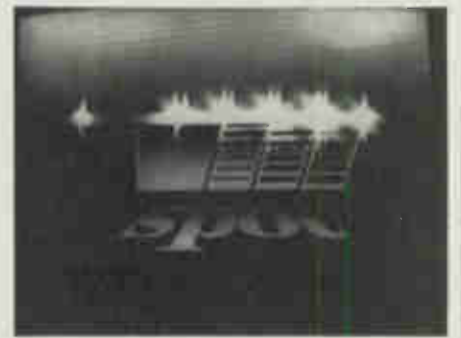
Dolphin

Some of the most exciting advances in creative video technology have taken place in the field of electronic-computer animation. Images are scanned by the computer where they can be flexed, oscillated, colorized and put through any number of contortions to produce a mind boggling array of illusions.

Computer animation, expeditious, versatile, and relatively economical endeavors to marry art and electronics to produce images that are pleasing, memorable and meaningful. Recently, one of the largest complete on-air packages for television was produced for WWF in Koln, Germany with a series of 96 individual graphic animations on the WWF logo. These were animated on an electronic animation system.

Allen Stanley, President of Dolphin, stated that with the increasing competition to attract and hold the viewer's attention and to fight through the barrage of station breaks, commercials and promos, more stations are seeking new ways to make their graphics "leap off the screen into the viewer's consciousness."

Miriam Shubin
Dolphin Productions, Inc., NY





MEMBERS ASSOCIATION

IF Studios

In today's film and television industry - a design revolution is underway. More and more people are finding themselves involved with film graphics. Almost every commercial, movie, and promotion seen today seems to involve some type of graphic animation.

Film graphics is an exciting medium with boundless possibilities, giving the designer a moving canvas on which to express his ideas.

One of the most important aspects to remember is that there is no substitute for a good basic design. Just as with a print ad, every segment of film should be able to stand on its own. The addition of motion and sound should act only to enhance that design. With all the advanced technology in computerized motion control - design is still the key element.

Using this philosophy, the final result on film, hopefully, will retain the integrity of the design. Toward this end, the designer and camera operator work closely together in the creative process.

Computer technology aids in the execution of precision camera moves and details -- allowing the designer to concentrate on design. The designer should recognize

the computer only as a valuable extension of his, or her talents.

In my opinion, film graphic animation studios should act as an aid to the station's or agency's art director, to help serve as a visual problem solver. A studio should be able to interpret the design, reinforce it with the right motion, deliver the desired message, and evoke the proper emotional response. Another important objective of the production studio is to bring the design to life within the confines of the deadline and budget. One of the great misconceptions in today's industry is that you have to have exorbitant budgets in order to produce outstanding film graphics. Many exciting visual designs can be achieved with minimal budgets - maintaining good solid design and the right motion as the key elements.

One of the fastest growing graphic industries today is film animation, as evidenced by the number of new studios entering the field. A challenge the art director faces is a better understanding of the medium he is designing for in order to successfully communicate his ideas to these studios.

As the new decade unfolds, it is quite possible that the age of visual design is ahead of us rather than behind us.

Patrick Egan
Producer, IF Studios, NY

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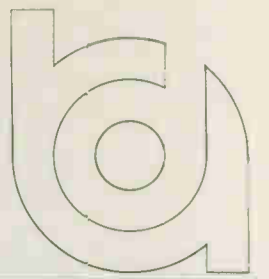
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All graphics on this page were created by IF Studios. Top: USA Network. Center: NBC Magazine. Bottom: KTVU-TV, California.



In this issue, we will discuss strategies for assertive management. Many creative managers (and managers of creative employees) develop a distinctly ineffective supervisory style. They often wish to be liked by their subordinates or, at the other end of the continuum, wish to be feared by their subordinates. Sometimes they are excessively compliant while at other times they are overly aggressive.

None of these approaches are effective. The solution lies in assertive management and assertive communication. We will explore the advantages of these techniques and the means for implementation in this column.

Managers are often disappointed when they do not attain what they want within the organization and when subordinates do not live up to their expectations or higher management does not support their personal objectives. The reality is that people often do not do what we want because they do not know what we want. We assume that people understand what we mean and understand what we require.

Direct communication is the essence of assertive communication. Assertive communication is the essence of assertive management. Think of how often you resent when colleagues and staff members do not comply with your wishes when, in fact, they simply do not know what you want. Bear in mind that knowledge of your desires does not necessarily insure compliance. But you can be certain that compliance is virtually impossible when your request is not clearly specified.

One of the more useful messages to be derived from assertive communications is the need to avoid generalities and deliver concrete and specific messages. The admonition to reduce waste in your department is not nearly as useful as a specification of what form of waste you find excessive and by how much and when you expect it to be reduced. If you are able to help your staff devise specific methods to accomplish your objectives, the assertive management technique is complete.

Explaining your requests and objectives is an important motivational technique which helps assure that the message will be received and properly implemented. Any manager with line authority can issue a directive and expect that some effort will be



Shrink Rapped

by Dr. Jay Finkelman,
Station Manager, KTVU-TV, San Francisco

made to carry it out. However, the assertive manager will make the additional effort to explain the reason for a request so that an employee does not regard it as arbitrary and unnecessary.

Because we do not live or work in an ideal world, it is necessary to understand when assertive communication may fail. Under those circumstances the smart assertive manager knows how to back off. There will always be some employees who cannot be handled assertively. You may have to gradually sensitize them to your desires. Similarly, there will always be certain supervisors with whom you cannot deal assertively. Unfortunately, it will always be their prerogative to have you escorted from their office or, worse yet, to appear to listen only to ignore your message and become angry with you. Obviously, with such individuals, it will be necessary to use an altered approach to assertive management.

The greatest danger is that the assertive management technique will be dropped prematurely without allowing its benefits to become manifest. Fear of its use, excessive sensitivity on behalf of your employees or supervisor or a single bad experience may lead you to abandon the technique. The problem may have been your lack of skill and sophistication in assertive communication and assertive management. It is all too easy to "back off" before the technique has had a fair chance.

A cause of potential failure is the confusion between assertive communication and aggressive communication. The techniques are antithetical. The former is effective while the latter is destructive. In fact, aggressive communication is often used by those who have not mastered assertive communication. A poor practice

of assertive communication often allows the process to deteriorate into aggressive communication.

Aggression is often a response to frustration. Sometimes, the frustration occurs because you have been unable to deliver a message to a listener. This is certainly understandable, although it is a totally dysfunctional means of improving the communication process. The one thing of which you can be certain is that aggression injected into faulty communication will further deteriorate the process.

The remainder of this column will be devoted to guidelines for assertive communication and assertive management.

GUIDE TO ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Make the person to whom you are speaking believe that there is an actual benefit derived by listening to your message.

Time your message so that the listener is most receptive to its content. Sometimes it is best to delay a conversation if it is apparent that the listener is not emotionally prepared to receive it. It is not delivering the message that counts but rather having it received.

Try to frame your message from the perspective of the listener. Not everyone has the same reference point that you do and not everyone is likely to interpret a message the way you would.

It is always a good strategy to incorporate redundancy in your message. It seldom hurts to explain things twice and it may be destructive if your message is misunderstood or misinterpreted. It is always a good idea to calibrate people so that you know who has to hear something once and who

requires three repetitions.

Avoid the use of humor -- and especially sarcasm -- pertaining to issues that others take seriously. All too often a listener misinterprets your message and is hurt as a consequence.

Above all else, say what you mean. Do not assume that others understand what you mean. Do not assume that others know how you feel. The clearer and more direct your message the greater the likelihood of its accurate transmission.

GUIDE TO ASSERTIVE MANAGEMENT

Assign total tasks to employees so that they understand what is expected of them and see how it fits into organizational objectives. Furnish them with specific requirements and deadlines. Let them report their progress to you.

Correct errors immediately when they become apparent. Do it in a supportive and helpful fashion -- one that is likely to improve the situation in the future. The worst thing for you to do is to allow resentment to incubate because this is most likely to result in aggressive management in the future. On the other hand, always allow for alternate means of accomplishing the same objective. Judge employees by the result not the method.

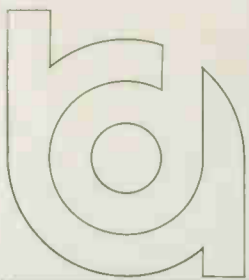
Do not request input from employees unless there is a substantial chance that you will actually use it. If it turns out that implementation is not desirable, be sure to explain your appreciation for their continued interest. You had best do this infrequently because the line quickly wears thin.

Share any constraints under which you must operate with your employees. Otherwise, they may misinterpret your failure to go along with their suggestions as a rejection of their ideas rather than your inability to comply. Sharing options as well as constraints also increases the cohesiveness of your work unit.

Positive reinforcement is an essential dimension of assertive management. If you want good behavior to continue you should reinforce it at every opportunity.

The transition to assertiveness will not be effortless, but it will be worth it. Assertive communicators are better communicators and assertive managers are better managers.

Jay Finkelman

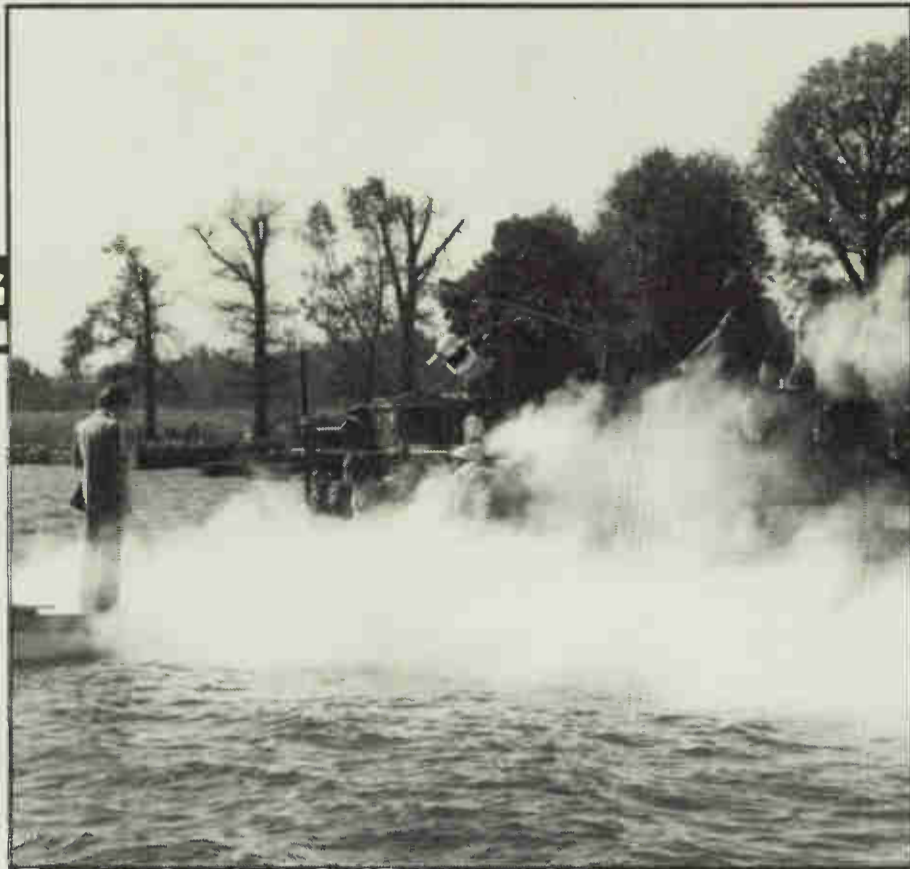


BROADCAST DESIGN

We, as television designers, are not often called upon to recreate the image of the master's handiwork so when asked recently to produce a realistic cloud for a weather promo, I was naturally excited. The concept was to put the weatherman in the sky on a cloud and to do so in such a way that the viewer could not tell that he was still actually on the ground. The design and production for this event was undertaken in cooperation with a very talented local film production company called Bonner Films.

Lee Bonner, the director, chose to locate the shooting on a semi-protected cove off the Chesapeake two important elements. It presented us with a horizon which contained little land and therefore no bothersome high points. And, it allowed us to place our weatherman on a floating platform so that he would move naturally with the water further adding to the sense that he was not on earth. Now, all this sounded pretty simple until I realized that what Lee had in mind was a floating "dock" six feet wide by thirty five feet long with a ten foot wing off the port side of the far end. Sensing that I was not sufficiently awed by this prospect, Lee went on to inform me that he wanted us to cover our "little" platform with dry ice fog. After a few moments of brief panic, I began to search my mind for potential solutions to these problems. What follows is a discussion of some of those solutions. Those that worked, as well as those that that appeared to be less than wonderful!

The dock proved to be quite simple. A deck was constructed of CDX plywood and 2 X 4's. The modules (five in all plus one three-foot end cap) were fitted with wooden tie-off cleats at each corner and designed to mount on large 1X2X8 foot blocks of one-pound density styrofoam. Styrofoam at one pound density will support 60 pounds of weight per cubic foot, so it was fairly easy to estimate the amount of foam material needed to support the entire pier. In addition to the tremendous floatation characteristics, styrofoam is relatively inexpensive and easily obtainable. We acquired ours from Amotex Plastics, P.O. Box 3330, Baltimore, MD 21213, phone: (301) 732-0230, but there are many manufacturers around the country. The plywood modules



WJZ-TV Weatherman claims it's like walking on air!

Scenic Routes

were fitted, on location, with canvas straps long enough to serve as harnesses around the styrofoam blocks. These straps were stapled in place and served to keep the blocks from separating from the modules when subjected to the movement of the water. All this done, and the units lashed together with hemp line, we moved on to the more difficult problem of how to cover our dock with fog.

The size of the area to be fogged and the cloud quality required made it necessary to use the dry ice fog method. Since dry ice fog tends to seek the lowest level, we believed that it was essential to achieve a thick and even distribution, and to contain that distribution as much as possible on the surface of the dock. In an effort to accomplish both of these purposes, 250 feet of ABS drainage tubing both solid and perforated was acquired and installed along the top outside edge of the pier. This installation was, again, done by using canvas straps stapled down. While the ABS ultimately proved to be an excellent distribution system, this particular arrangement was to be doomed to dismal failure. Next, we attempted to produce the desired results by mounting the ABS on a wooden

grid which could be moved back and forth on the dock and placed in whatever position needed. This system worked somewhat better but was still less than perfect. Finally, the ABS hoses had to be shortened as much as possible and the perforated sections had to be limited to 12 - 15 feet in order to get the necessary volume of fog distributed evenly along the length of the hoses. Further, the grid had to be placed almost immediately in front of the camera lens in order to get the proper coverage across the camera field. The camera was then mounted very low and the shots were taken upward through the fog field. In addition to the "pier" and tubing mentioned, this operation required six dry ice foggers and 3,000 (count them) pounds of dry ice.

The final outcome of this exercise would not produce a single drop of rain, but it sure looked like the WJZ-TV weatherman was, indeed, walking on a cloud.

I have been informed by a reliable source that Rosco Labs will market a new fluid-type fogger in the spring of this year. This fogger is of interest because it has some rather pleasant advantages over the conventional fluid

foggers. First, the fluid is odorless and will not irritate eyes or throat and is entirely non-toxic. In addition, the fluid will not burn, neither in liquid or atomized form, so there is no flash-fire potential during use and the fluid can be stored and transported safely. Finally, and perhaps most interesting to those of us who occasionally have to use fog on location, the fluid is non-oily and will not leave the usual oily film in the area surrounding the shooting location.

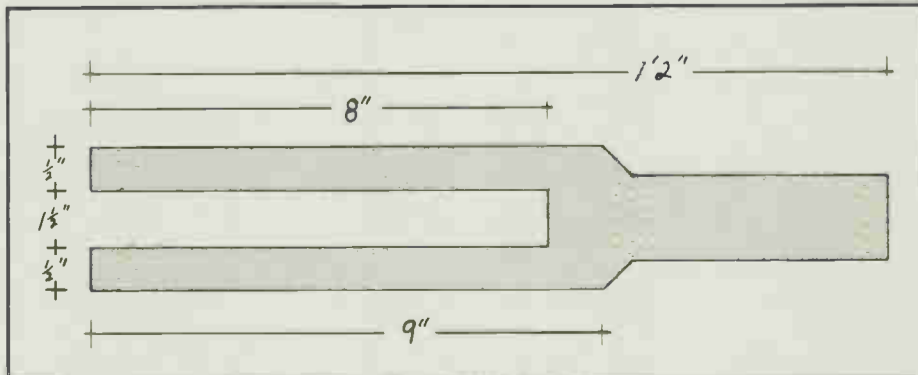
The Ekedahl Tool and Supply Company is marketing two variations of a product which may well be the perfect answer for the television scenic artist who dislikes the color of the studio floor. Protect-A-Deck I and II are adhesive backed papers available in 30, 36 and 48-inch wide by 100 or 200 foot long rolls. They feature low tack and high release so that they can be removed without damaging the existing floor. Protect-A-Deck is a white paintable, rubber fibrous paper, coated with a special latex pressure sensitive adhesive. Protect-A-Deck II is essentially the same as the "I" except that it is a bit thicker. This might just be the best replacement for peel pastes in those situations where you wish to paint the studio floor or a wall which must later be returned to the original condition. In addition to this application the product can be used to cover camera cable running across the studio floor. It can be purchased from the Ekedahl Tool and Supply Company, Theatre and Performing Arts division, P.O. Box 13198, Pittsburg, PA 15243, Phone: (412) 531-2850, Attention: Bill Miller.

The final tip for this issue comes from Bob Craigue, scenic builder at WBZ-TV, Boston. A home made tool, which Bob calls a tuning fork, for those musicians among us, is used as an aid in establishing angles for "cut and fit as you go" work. The tool is easy to make and is used by placing the piece to be cut into the slot of the fork, then sliding the piece with the pre-cut angle into place. The tuning fork is then fitted against the angle cut and is in position to act as a straight edge for the uncut piece.

If you have scenic thoughts and shop tips to share with us, please send them to me. Next issue deadline is March 15.

Robert Rayne
WJZ-TV

3725 Malden Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21211
(301) 466-0013





WANTED

A specialist in Graphics, Illustration, Photography, Drafting, Scenic design, Lighting, Makeup, Construction, Model making, Animation, Audio Visual, Fine and Commercial Art, Typography, and equipment maintenance, to work in a TV Graphics Department. Will also be called upon to occasionally produce greeting cards, frame pictures, and repair shoes. Long hours, low pay, but a promise of romance

Graphics Design:USA, America's largest audited circulation of art directors and graphic designers, recently published a brief article in their November, 1980 issue. The article was written by our BDA President, Gill Cowley and directed to the general graphics community with the hope of instilling an awareness of what, exactly, TV graphics designers do. I felt that the information should be shared with our membership so, with the kind consent of Graphics Design:USA, herewith is a reprint.

The demand of the one-eyed medium that sits in 98% of our living rooms presents a unique challenge to broadcast designers. The challenge demands knowledge and creativity in every aspect and field of design.

For our on-air duties, broadcast designers are required to be illustrators, cartoonists and type designers. It is necessary to know, prepare and sometimes shoot animations, both on film and tape. Knowledge of stand and remote still photography is essential. In the print world we devise everything from small space TV Guide ads to full page newspaper ads, as well as trade publication ads, booklets, brochures, invitations, etc.

We are corporate designers that coordinate everything from the on-air "look," to the stationery, memo pads, and sales promotion materials. We even design news vehicle markings, and occasionally helicopter markings. Add to the preceding fields scenic design. Here the understanding of construction techniques, materials and paints is of primary importance, not to mention the awareness of staging, furnishings, lighting, special relationships and camera angles.

As an art director it is necessary to be proficient in managerial skills of organization, budgeting, purchasing, directing a staff and working with upper management. Obviously not all of the forementioned skills apply to every individual or situation and staffs are built around personal strengths, but a broad spectrum of design possibilities does exist. The broadcast designer is called upon to meet these requirements and others. In our vocation there are some generic problems. The perception of management and the reception

It's a living...

and respect of our credibility. The Broadcast Designers Association is tackling these problems on many fronts. We are distributing information on the wide variety of skills necessary to do our job through an annual convention and newsletters. We are providing speakers at related industry and management meetings, we are writing articles and generally promoting ourselves with our acquired skills. The BDA has started a design competition to acknowledge and reward outstanding graphic design.

The BDA is building an awareness of our task and a realization that our individual problems are similar and surmountable. The situations we encounter individually are inherent throughout the medium... Time! Our deadlines are often hectic. Imagine that while designing and ordering type for the next week's five quarter page TV Guide ads, you are designing several visuals for that evening's newscast, answer fourteen phone calls and are requested to join a production meeting for another show.

The average day is long and the compensation usually inadequate. The designer-manager is also frequently placed low on the management scale. A lot of unqualified opinions temper our judgements.

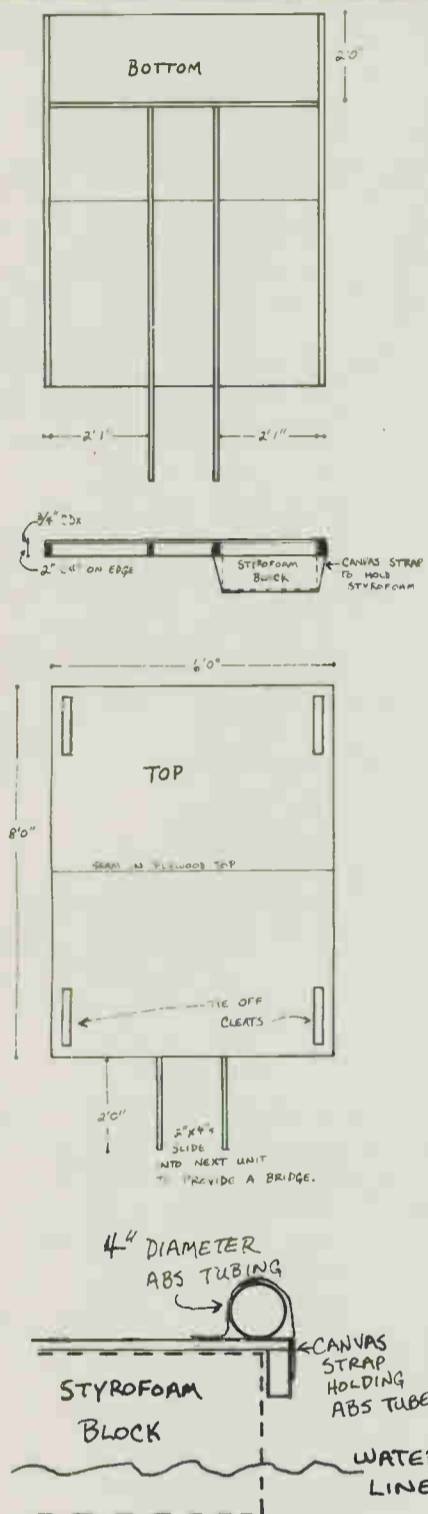
These problems are surmountable and are being surmounted now, more slowly than some would like but more quickly than others can accept.

What about the future? The broadcast design field will become increasingly technical.

In the future the artist's cubicle will contain fewer of the familiar tactile tools such as brushes, watercolors, stans. Instead the artist will use computer modules with direct to screen drawing with instant storage and retrieval for both still and animated works. Work loads will only increase, especially with increased competition. More positions will open up, hopefully some at entry level. Cable TV, while in its infancy, will provide additional demands and positions.



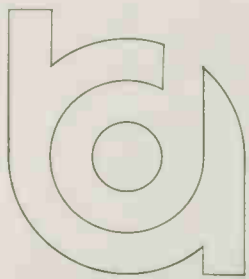
Gil Cowley, WCBS-TV, New York.



Schematics above outline the specifics of a floating dock.



The "tuning fork". Opposite page is how you make it. Above, is how you use it.



BROADCAST DESIGNER

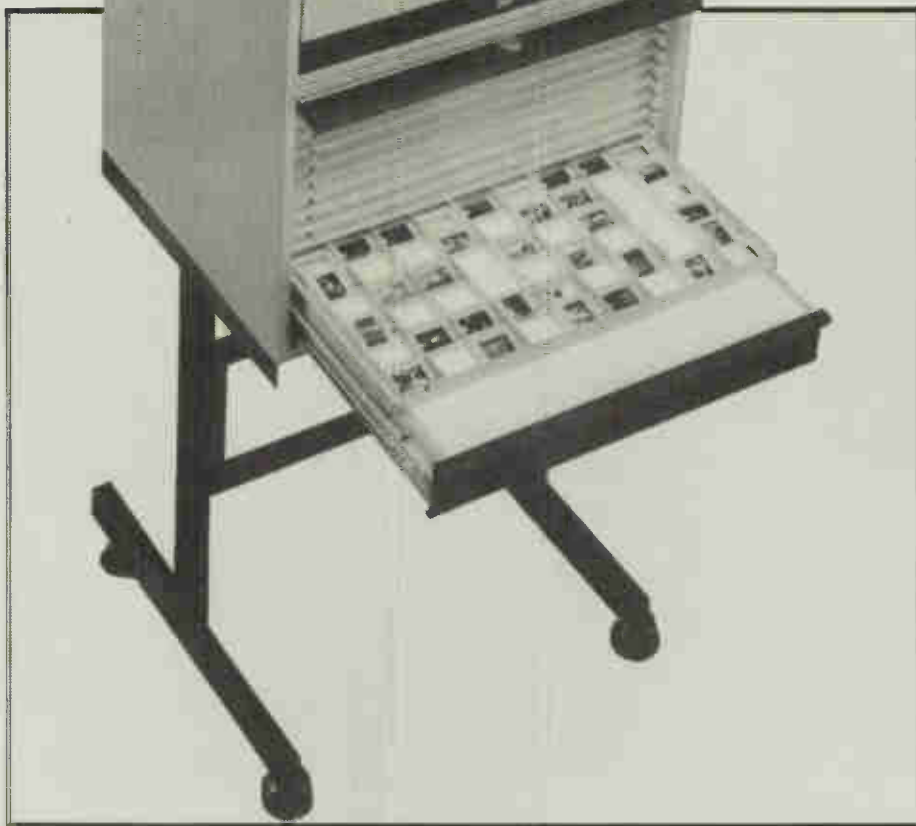
Did you know?

I recently took the time to attend a Graphics Trade Show in New York so I could bring myself up to date on what's happening in art material and equipment. I found a few items of interest to pass along.

Perk up those ears, you news graphics people! Here is a wonderful and reasonably priced storage system for slides. It will probably be a while before most of us gets a computerized frame-store unit at our station, like the one mentioned on the front page. In the interim, if your slide collection totals several hundred "active" slides, the new Multiplex 540 system could be just what you've been looking for. It's designed for the person who needs a fast retrieval and viewing system for slides that are used frequently. The Multiplex is a modular horizontal viewing system and is easily expandible. Specifically, there are three basic elements to the system. The "541", a compact, horizontal storage and viewing cabinet with a built-in light source. The "542", an additional storage unit, the same as the 541 without the pull-out light source. Both styles have room for 540 slides each cabinet - 10 indexed slide-holding frames contain groups of 54 slides per frame. These are removable if necessary. The third element is a steel tubing base with chrome plated casters. Designed to hold the 541 cabinet, plus a 542 on top of it.

It's a real nice looking rig-beige enamel cabinets trimmed in dark brown. You can start with the 541 storage and viewing cabinet. It's only \$320 plus shipping. The 542 add-on cabinet is \$210 and the 543 portable base is \$100. Write for a handsome brochure and the dealer nearest you if you're interested. Multiplex Display Co. 1555 Larkin Williams Road, Fenton, MO 63026. Phone: (314) 343-5700.

More storage units . . .
ROLL/STOR and FLAT/STOR. The Roll/Stor are basically good looking, sturdy and relatively inexpensive when compared to the all-steel variety. They're made from corrugated fibreboard with



The handsome and functional "Multiplex 540" slide file system.

steel reinforced styrene frames. Units can be used as desk-top or stacked from the floor from an optional metal base. The Flat/Stor comes set-up, ready for use. The internal construction integrates 5/8" particleboard with heavy gauge steel channels and frame. The shelves won't sag, according to the manufacturer, and the drawers won't buckle. (Nothing worse than sagging drawers!) These too can be used as table toppers or from a floor base. Obviously, they come in several sizes. Costs range from \$105 for the 17 3/4" x 16 3/8" x 23 1/2" size, to \$254 for the 48" x 16 3/8" x 37 1/2" size. Again . . . if you want to know more, write for their colorful brochure - it's worth seeing. Bankers Box Storage Systems, 1789 Norwood Avenue, Itasca, Ill. 60143
Or phone: (312) 893-1600

Here are a few items for quickie set ideas. For background wall treatments, try mounting these panels to a flat. They are called dimensional show panels and are made of fire-retardent, vacuum-formed PVC heavyweight plastic. They come in 2 X 2 foot sections, white only, and are packed in 10 and 20-sheet cartons. Price is \$2.90 each by the 10 per carton, and \$2.75 each by the 20 per carton. They can be painted, sprayed or brushed. There are 6 different patterns available - all pretty interesting. Call or write TRIMCO, (Trim Corporation of America) 10 West 20th street, New York, NY 10011. Or (212) 989-1616. Ask for "3-Dimensional Show Panels Brochure."

Here's something to excite the imagination. It's called "Contour" and it's a series of unique shapes

of formed fiberboard tubes. They can be sawed, nailed, drilled, glued and painted. there are a variety of stock sizes and shapes ranging in price from (square) 24 x 24 x 64" high for \$31.50 to 24 x 24 x 6" high for only \$4.02 each. There are 12 styles, each in five different sizes. In addition to the stock sizes listed, custom sizes are also available. TRIMCO will cut to special sizes for \$1.00 per cut. Write or call TRIMCO, again.

This series is called "Move-Modules" and they're basically sold to department stores for product display. However, I suggest the possibility of their consideration as TV scenery. They could be worked into some interesting seating arrangements, or used as foreground pieces. They're priced pretty reasonably for TV scenery. The modules come in several sets of shapes. They are uniquely designed for flexibility - to wrap around, stack, nest and blend with each other. There are ten different sets of shapes. Write for the catalog, as it shows pictures and illustrations of the many possible set-ups. Priced from \$122 for a set of 3 hexagonal pieces to \$360 for a 3-piece group of pyramid shapes. Also available to purchase individually - \$18 to \$30 each piece. Write Imperial Display Corp. 34-10 38th Avenue, Long Island City, NY 11101. Phone: (212) 361-3121.

If you ever have the need for cut-out type (some in very large sizes), and your shop hasn't got the time to make the letters - now you can buy them all made. Actually, you can use them for any kind of signage or scenery, too. There are all kinds of finishes and sizes: mirror, marble, plastic, metallic, plexi, cork and more. Once, again



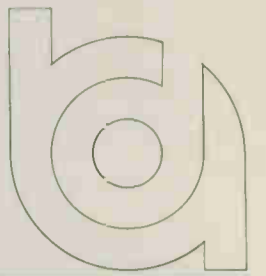
Flat/Stor, a reasonably priced alternative to metal file cases.



Trimco's 3-D Show Panels. This is just one of several design patterns.



Contour - a series of fibreboard shapes for use as set peices.



Graphics:USA is now
Graphics Design:USA

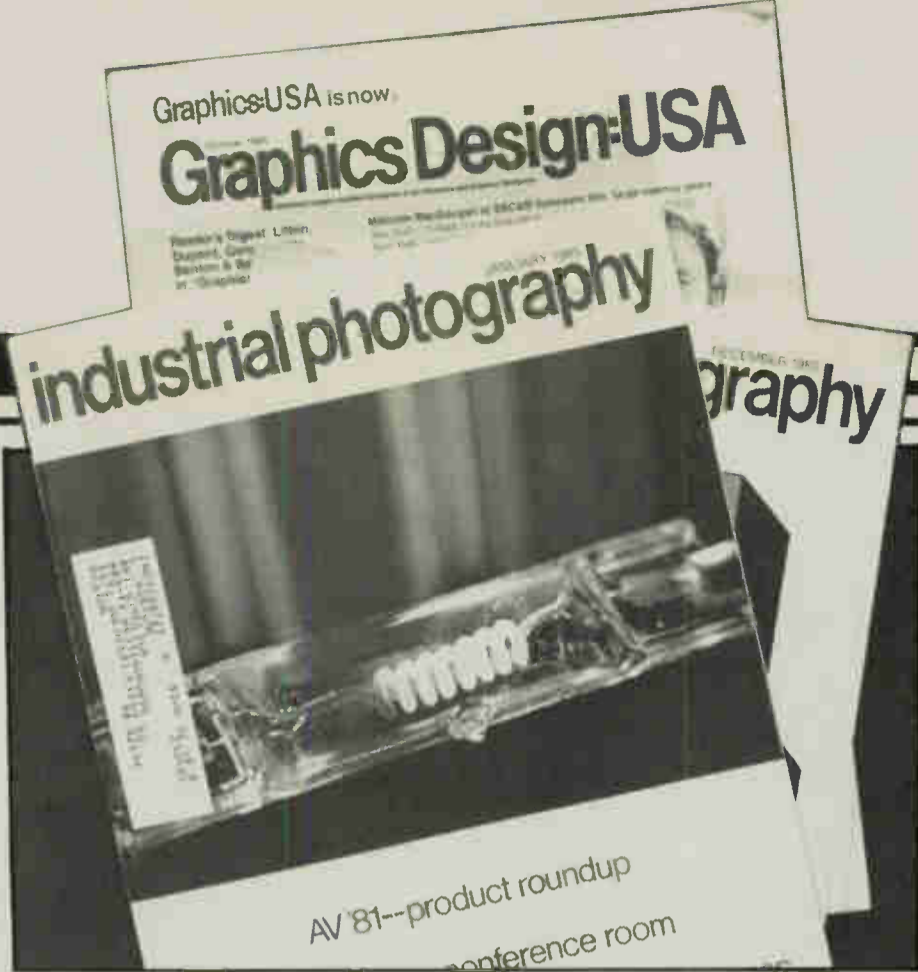
industrial photography

BROADCAST DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

- if you're at all interested, you should really see the brochure. It's from TRIMCO. Ask for the TC-77 "Dimensional materials for distinctive signage" folder.

At the trade show, I saw a binding system that's new to me. If you are called upon to come up with fast and good looking sales presentation booklets, and would like something slicker than the usual 3-ring bind job, the system may be for you. It is called VELO-BIND and requires the use of a basic piece of equipment costing about \$900. It is essentially a punch and bind machine, quite simple to operate. Three steps are required: punch the material, insert the comb-like binder and activate the bind unit. there is another optional unit if you are interested in binding with hard covers in thicker sizes. The dealer says you can bind a professional looking soft cover document in less than a minute. It's lightweight, portable, and easy to operate. No gluing, sewing, chemicals or mess. I saw it in action at the trade show and was impressed. Want to know more? Call or write: Velo-Bind, 650 Almanor Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. (408) 732-4200

Lou Bortone



AV '81--product roundup
conference room

Industrial Photography, United Business Publications, 475 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. **Graphics Design:USA** has made the BDA a kind offer. We have sent our mailing list to them and they will forward to all of our members, a free subscription invitation card. When you get it, simply fill it out and mail it back to them. You will then be receiving your very own monthly copy of a good informational graphics magazine. Here's another. **Audio-Visual Communications**. Write on your company letterhead requesting a free subscription to : 475 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Janice Barnes, Art Director at WPSD-TV in Paducah, Kentucky, wrote us a note of interest to add to our "liquid cures" from last issue. The suggestion from Janice is: When needing to remove paint from your brushes or from non-porous materials like acetates, glass, etc., simply use isopropyl alcohol. It is an ideal solvent and much easier on your hands - not to mention your nose and lungs - than your commercial acrylic brush cleaners.

There are several companies throughout the country that have formed with the express idea of providing design services to TV News Departments anywhere in the United States. Their basic function is designing news sets. Some of them will also construct, deliver and set-up these sets. Some include lighting-grid plans and a complete back-up news-graphics service. If any of this interests you or your news directors, simply contact any of those listed and ask for price ranges and slide samples - then go on from there.

G & G DESIGNS
766 Second Street
Encinitas, CA 92024
(714) 942-5180
Contact Gil Davis

THE GRAPHIC EXPRESS
7969 Engineer Road
Suite 201
San Diego, CA 92111
(714) 565-2146
Contact Byron Andrus

DYNA-METRICS
6420 Federal
Suite D
San Diego, CA 92114
(714) 583-8890
Contact John Peterson



Here's a very sensible message to the membership from our new administrator, Mona Regler.

The Broadcast Designers Association membership dues for 1981 are starting to arrive in the BDA office. Those people who get their dues in by March 15, 1981 will be included in the Membership Roster that the BDA will publish and distribute to the members, and will continue to receive their quarterly **Scanlines**.

I would like to remind the members to forward your dues just as soon as possible so that your name can be included in this roster and will remain on our mailing list. Again, the deadline is March 15th.

Your BDA Office is now well established and is here for your assistance. If you need any information, or have questions, please call me at (512) 428-6720.

We have experienced some delay in forwarding "Designing for Television: News Sets" book to those who have requested them, because of a shipping problem... the bulk of the books have been shipped from California and have not yet arrived in the BDA office here in Harlingen, Texas. Thank you for your patience and I will do my best to expedite your orders.

Mona Regler

BDA Executive Administrator

Hot Tips

Here are some more Trade Magazines available to professionals on a free subscription basis. Last issue we mentioned a monthly called **Photomethods**. Here is another photography entry called **Industrial Photography**. Try writing a request on your company letterhead for this one.



Just our type... and in large sizes, too!



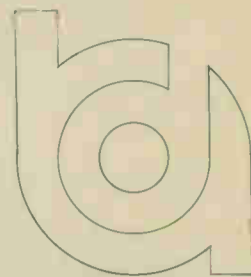
Velo-Bind, a new system for binding presentation booklets.



One of several lines of contemporary drafting furniture by Neolt.

There is an absolutely beautiful line of high-style furniture for draftsmen, designers, architects, et al. called **NEOLT**. A very complete series of all kinds of drawing tables, chairs, taborets, cabinets, and drafting tools is shown. The equipment is imported from Italy and the sole agent in the United States is Martin Instrument Co. Do yourself a favor and send for their brochure. If you have no budget for buying furniture at this time, send for it anyway - it will give you something to dream about! Write to Martin Instrument Co. 13450 Farmington Road, Livonia, Michigan 48150.

Lou Bortone

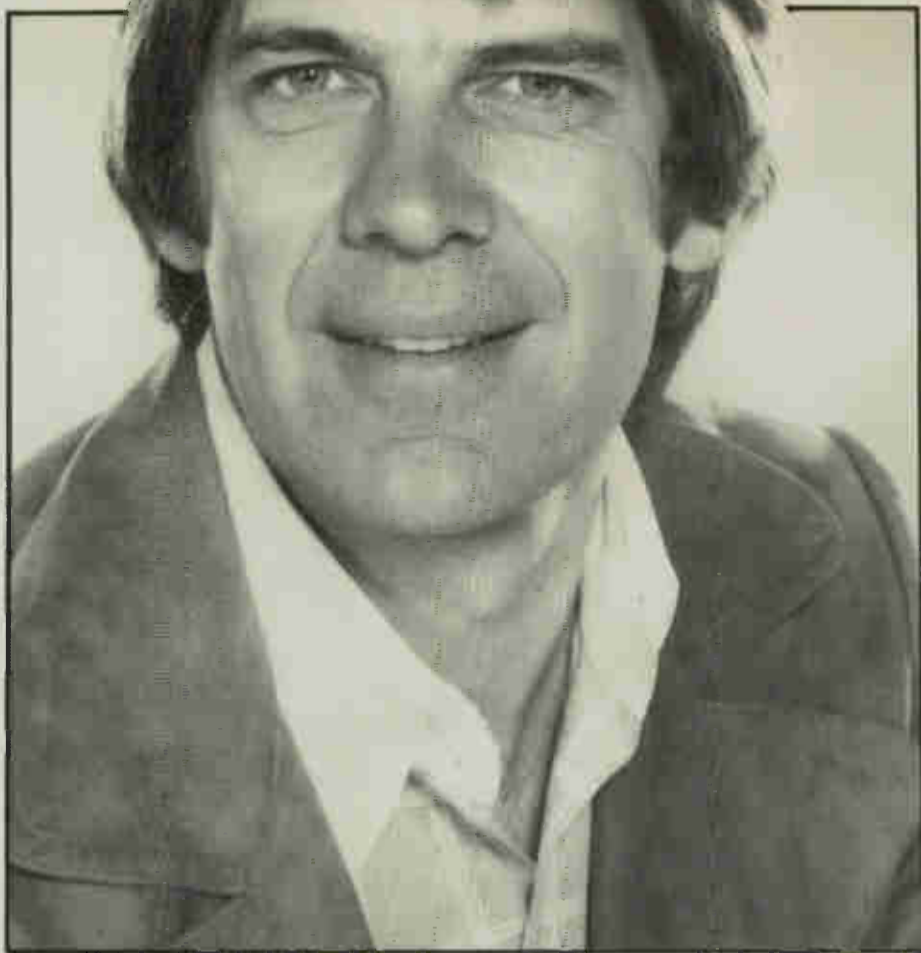


DESIGNERS ASSOCIATION

You have probably seen the name "Rene Lagler" on one of many network television shows. That's because Rene is one of the busiest set designers in Hollywood. I managed to catch him by phone on the set at NBC in Hollywood. No easy task, as he often spends 60 to 70 hours a week at his job.

Rene was born in Zurich, Switzerland but later attended high school in the United States and graduated from the College of Design in Los Angeles. Following graduation, he took his portfolio to E. Jay Krause Associates where he was promptly hired and assigned to a museum display project. Following that job he worked on another project, a set for a television show. It was the "Bob Hope Show". During his four year tenure at Krause Associates, Rene worked on over 300 television shows and specials. Although his background and training was in design he said he acquired the architectural and set construction knowledge through "osmosis" and by reading and just plain doing. He feels the most important training, though, is observation. "Wherever you go," he says, "in an office or restaurant, look at all the little details of the room and file them away in your mind for future use."

After four years with Krause, Rene decided to make it on his own. His first art directing job was for the Glen Campbell Show. That was in 1968. Since that time, Rene has designed and art directed hundreds of shows including: The



Rene Lagler, one of the busiest set designers in Hollywood.

Lagler is all Set!

Dolly Parton Show, Dinah!, Tony Orlando and Dawn, the Toni Tennille Show, Mary Tyler Moore Hour, plus many specials such as The Emmy and Grammy Awards, Andy Williams Christmas Special, George Burns Special, Cheryl Ladd and Donna Summers Specials. And once, he even designed a news set for KABC-TV in

Los Angeles.

Rene works much like most other art directors. His work begins with the standard production meeting. There, he absorbs all the input and then works over numerous floor plans until he feels he has a workable solution. "However, if the first thing the producer or director says is, 'I want

something that's never been done before' . . . that's when I get up and walk out!" says Rene.

Occasionally, and if time permits, Rene makes a simple quarter inch scale model of his design. "It's very helpful for producers and directors to better visualize", he says.

When dressing a set, Rene tries to envision the personality of the people in the setting and he adds all the little personal touches that those people might place in a room themselves.

Designing sets for television has become more difficult in the last few years, according to Rene. Primarily, because of budgetary considerations. Ten years ago, for example, Glen Campbell spent \$10,000 per week on sets. A comparable show today has about the same budget but obviously, one gets about half the set for the same price. The set that cost \$2,000 just five years ago, costs closer to \$5,000 today.

Rene admits to occasionally getting the same feeling that comes over most Art Directors: that he would like to try something else. But, he knows he won't. Rene, like most TV Art Directors, puts a great deal of time and energy into his work. That's why he had to smile when he recently saw a sign back stage that read: "If you think the dead don't come alive, you should be here at quitting time!"

We can all relate to that!

Dick Weise, Art Director
KTVU-TV, Oakland



Some samples of Rene Lagler's Design work. Above: A segment of the Cheryl Ladd Special. Right: the logo for an Elvis Special.



Barbara Eden Special



Donna Summers Special