

# ASSEMBLED

NUMBER 04 MARCH 2024



WORKING FROM HOME  
IN A POST COVID WORLD

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EDITOR

CIARA GALLOGLY  
COLOURIST

AN IRISH SCREEN EDITORS PUBLICATION

# Hello & Welcome

Welcome to issue 4 of Assembled, ISE's online magazine, which we hope you will enjoy reading. Thank you to Jeremy Briers for all his hard work with the production of the magazine and for his article on remote working. Thanks also to Eoin McDonagh for his Recommended Reading piece and to Shane Woods for his article on managing Avid media. Thanks are also due to colourist Ciara Gallogly and editor Job Ter Burg for their time answering Assembly's questions about their careers. We are always looking for ideas for articles and interviews for forthcoming issues so please don't be shy! You can contact Jeremy at [jayce@irishscreeneditors.com](mailto:jayce@irishscreeneditors.com)

ISE has had a good 2023 with membership increasing to 139 members - we are keen for more to join so please pass on the word - membership details are at [www.irishscreeneditors.com/membership](http://www.irishscreeneditors.com/membership). We would like to encourage you to use the ISE acronym in your screen credits and social media; this helps to elevate the guild's profile which in turn enhances the perception of the craft at home and abroad. Since we started ISE in 2019 we have been working together to strengthen our community and we feel that tangible benefits have been created for our members since its foundation.

ISE was once again represented at the International Film Editors Forum, held in Cologne in October as part of the Edimotion Editing Festival organised by BFS, the German editing association. This forum brings together editing groups and guilds from around the world to discuss issues. The forum is an opportunity for editors from different countries to meet and network with a view to increased co-operation and understanding, and the elevation of the craft. The main theme being discussed was the arrival of AI in editing software. Committee member Shane Woods was also invited to speak in the International Panel at the festival to discuss the potential impact of AI on our work as editors and assistant editors.

In December 2023 ISE committee member Sarah McTeigue was elected to the board of Tempo, a federation that connects editing guilds and associations from all over the world - see their website <https://www.tempofilm.com>. Sarah is based in Rome and is also a committee member of AMC, the Italian editors association.

ISE set up an Instagram account recently - @irishscreenedit - to join our Facebook and Twitter accounts - links to these are on the home page of our website. ISE also became admins of the Editors With Notions WhatsApp group with the gracious agreement of Róisín O'Donnell, the group's founder, and it is a lively forum indeed, open to ISE members and non-members alike.

Happy reading!

Tony Kearns, Chair ISE.





**Contributors / Writers**

**Tony Kearns  
Eoin McDonagh  
Shane Woods**

**Design & Layout Jeremy Briers**

Been a long time in the making of this edition thanks to a very heavy workload. Hopefully you find something interest in this release.

This is a magazine not just for ISE members but for anyone who visits our ISE website. If you are not a member but are eligible for membership I encourage you to apply. You don't even need a Leaving Cert:-) We are always looking for contributors and ideas for articles so feel free to get in touch with any of the committee members or myself. [jayce@irishscreeneditors.com](mailto:jayce@irishscreeneditors.com). Don't be shy, I don't bite, but I have been bitten.

As usual, no bribes, no synthesisers and unfortunately no swearing.

Jeremy Briers



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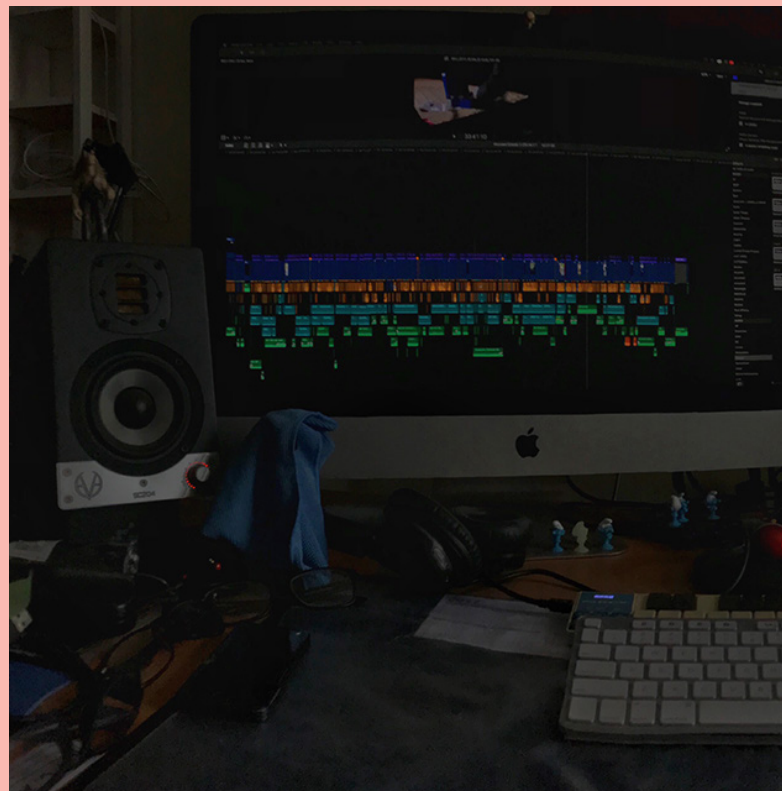
## Job Ter Burg

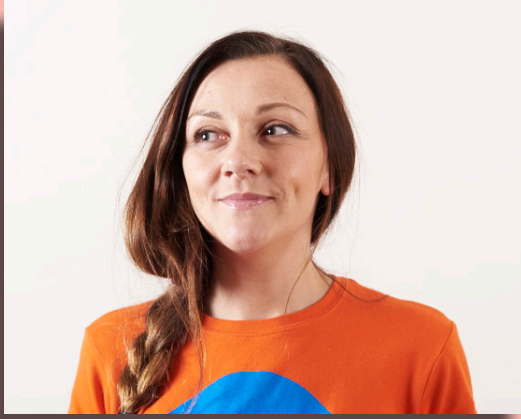
is a Dutch editor with a career spanning nearly thirty years. He is probably best known outside the Netherlands for his collaborations with the director Paul Verhoeven, most recently 2016's Oscar-nominated *Elle* and 2021's Palme d'Or nominated *Benedetta*. He is currently working on *The Watchers*, directed by Ishana Shyamalan and which was filmed in Ireland over the summer of 2023.

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## Working from home

Shane Woods delivers an article all about remote work in a time after COVID 19.





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### Ciara Gallogly

is a colourist based at Outer Limits post production facility in Dún Laoghaire. She graciously took the time to answer Assembly's questions about her career and her love of grading for TV and film.

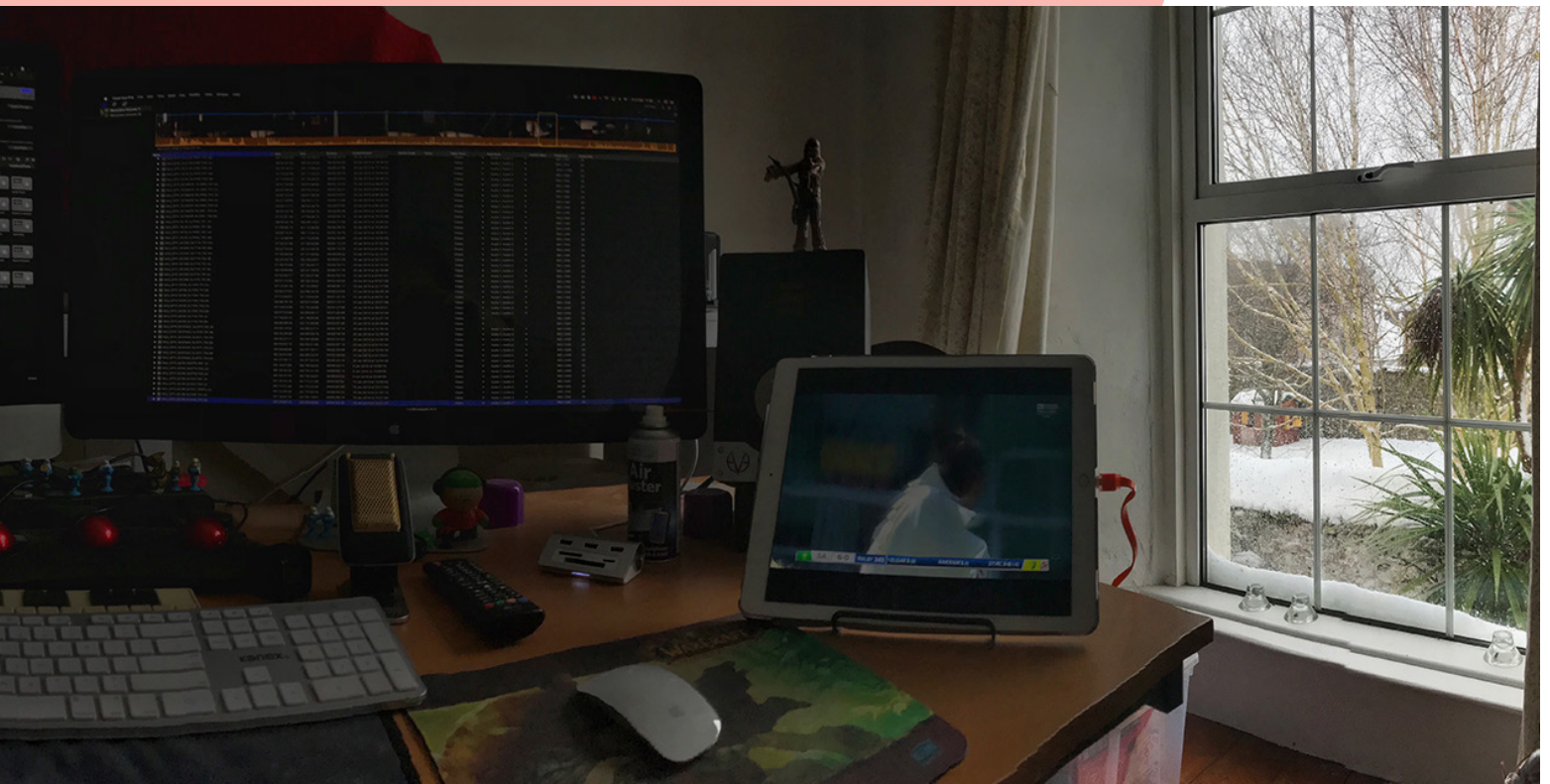
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# CIARA GALLOGLY COLOURIST

based at Outer Limits post production facility in Dún Laoghaire



**Tell us about your early career in Ireland, working in production companies and advertising, what roles you had and what you learned from these areas of work.**

While I was in my final year in Ballyfermot, I got some work with an editor called Breege Rowley. We were both from the same town in Mayo so I reached out to her for advice and she gave me an assistant job on a couple of projects she was working on. That was a really amazing opportunity, to be able to finish college with some real work experience.

After finishing my course, I started off as a production assistant in production companies, then I moved into an edit assistant role. As a PA it's a great way to start off in the industry as you get to shadow almost every role and see the process involved. You learn a certain amount in college but you really learn on the job, you need to get stuck in and make yourself useful. I remember one time as a runner helping out a DoP with his equipment because I was just standing around and needed to look busy! He passed on my details to the next production company who gave me an edit assistant role. And now I am grading some of his work. I love how that has come full circle! Even though I've been away for a number of years, those early connections are still there.

After a couple of years freelancing in production companies, I ended up working in an advertising agency as I got offered a full time position there as in-house editor. Learning about the TV commercials side of things and how an agency works really stood to me once I moved into the post house world, particularly as the post house I worked at in Melbourne was predominantly of TV commercials.

**Q Did you study film and media production at third level?**

**A** I went to Ballyfermot College of Further Education. I started off with a one year course that covered TV, film, radio & print journalism. I always knew I wanted to work in the television industry but didn't know where to start so it was really good to get some basic knowledge of all the different areas at this time. I then went on to do the two year Television Operations & Production course. It was a very technical and practical course which really suited me and looking back I can see that I was always going to end up in post-production, as I was always putting my hand up for the editing roles, while everyone else seemed to want to be a director.

**You moved to Australia in 2011, where you worked in post-production at Method Studios in Melbourne. How did the move to post come about?**

I left Ireland in 2011 to travel and the end goal was to live in Melbourne for a few years. After working in an agency for years I wanted to do something different, so the next obvious step was to move into post-production. I looked into a few different post houses and heard that Method studios were looking for someone so I went for an interview and got the job. Funnily enough despite wanting a change from working in an advertising agency, this post house only worked in TV commercials and short form projects. As assistant editor I got amazing training there. It was such a great working and learning environment, with great people too. I really loved that job. I learned so much and it was where I started my colour training as well.

**Q At Method Studios (now part of the Framestore empire) you got into grading - what gave you the impetus to become a colourist? Was it love at first grade?**

**A** I was still following my editing career goal and had started to work on some small commercials, when one of the colourists (Rosyln di Sisto) decided to make a move to Toronto - she asked me if I wanted to train up on the conform side of colour grading so that I could assist the senior colourist. As soon as I started training on the Resolve software I knew straight away I wanted to change direction. I absolutely loved it - it's very technical and then the world opens up to this really creative aspect with the colour grade. It's such an art form - there are the practical rules you learn, but then you can bend those rules, as long as you're consistent and it looks good.

And really it was as simple as that! Also it was pretty clear from the get-go that I could move along the colourist career path at a faster pace compared to editing. It was very slow to move up the ladder as an

editor in that particular post house at the time. There were long-standing editors who had great reputations that weren't going anywhere. As a junior colourist, there was no-one else in front of me, so it was a golden opportunity. I think also what helped is that I had full access to a professional grade suite and an extremely talented colourist mentor - Edel Rafferty. I could sit in on her grade sessions and learn how to deal with clients. The post-house really encouraged my training and allowed me to use the facilities on personal projects after hours. It was the best introduction and I feel really lucky to have gotten that opportunity - and cheers to my pal Ros for moving to Toronto!

I was actually surrounded by a lot of brilliant female colourists and Melbourne has a really strong colourist community. Even though it can be a male-dominated area - that never felt like an issue for me as my mentors were female and I was surrounded by other great female colourists who were extremely supportive - CJ Dobson, Angela Cerasci, Dee McClelland. They were a sound bunch and are still influential people for me, these women make all the hard work look easy! The colourist community there was a great support when I decided to go freelance.

Two years before I came home, the post-house part of Method Studios was shut down (they kept their VFX arm open). As we (me and my colleagues) were all made redundant we were given the option of purchasing equipment, so I was able to set myself up pretty quickly. The freelance post-industry is big in Melbourne and the work came in pretty quickly and steadily.

**What was behind your return to Ireland in January 2020? Apart from the obvious answer, that it's home! Did you see professional opportunities here? You made the move just as the pandemic was hitting the world so that must have been tricky. How has the transition back home gone for you?**

We always knew we wanted to come home and after two years of working for myself, I began to miss the

post house environment! Before moving back, I got in touch with some post houses in Dublin to see what opportunities were out there - colour grading is quite a niche profession so I knew there would only be a handful of jobs available. I did a couple of remote jobs (pre-pandemic!) with Outer Limits and they offered me a job. We moved back in December 2019 and 3 months later the pandemic hit!

Because Outer Limits has a lot of long-form projects, we were actually quite busy and had projects to keep us going through that first lockdown. I had always worked in short-form so getting my speed up was the initial obstacle. I was used to having 4 hours on a 30 second commercial and now I had a day to get through a full episode. It was a steep learning curve at the beginning. But I got my speed up after a few jobs and it's been pretty full on since then. It's a really busy place!

Despite the timing of the pandemic and our arrival home, it still feels like it was the right time for us. We were very lucky to have gotten home just before that otherwise we would have felt totally stuck over there. Melbourne is a much bigger city than Dublin, but it feels like there are just as many opportunities here for

me - the industries in each country are actually very similar. Both have a tight knit community and there's a lot of support for each other. There's so much going on in the industry here, lots of talent and amazing storytelling and high production value. I think no matter what country you live in - you just have to work hard and widen your network and the opportunities will come.

**Q** How has working at Outer Limits been for you?

**A** Outer Limits was a great move for me and a great place to help me reintegrate back into the Irish industry - it's a hugely respected post house and when you work here you can see why. It has really talented people in all departments and a great work culture. Eugene McCrystal and Gary Curran are great mentors and the work itself is so varied, I get to work on TV series, documentaries, commercials and short films. I'm very grateful to work alongside Gary who is one of the best colourists in the country.







**Q** You have graded a variety of projects, commercials, music videos, short films, documentaries, dramas and online content. Can you talk about the different challenges and fun aspects that these types of production bring to your colourist table?

**A** When a project gets to the colour grade part of the process, I feel like there's a certain level of pressure released and the director can relax a bit. It's the beginning of the end of a project, so it can be a time to get really creative and start bringing to life the original ideas and references they had in their mind for the final result. Of course a lot of that is taken care of through lighting and production-design and its pure joy to start bringing all that to life and bringing out all those details that were thought of during pre-production. Inevitably, there are often things that need to be fixed, but it's also an immensely satisfying feeling to be able to fix something, or smooth out some lighting issue that happened on set.

I absolutely love working on a commercial or music

video that has a fast turnaround and you have the instant gratification of completing the grade in a day and everyone goes home happy. Getting a job turned around in one day adds its own pressure, but in commercials for example you can really get into the fine details of each image. I really love that and from working in an agency years ago, I know how much work is involved prior to getting it to the grade, to know that it deserves all the attention it gets. Also my husband is a creative director from an art direction background, so I also get the love of attention to detail skill from him!

To be fair every job has an immense amount of work put in pre-production and in production, so I understand going into any job whether it's a short film or documentary to treat it like it's my own personal project.

Then there's the other side of getting stuck into a TV series where you might spend a day before the actual grade creating different looks and presenting that to a client to show them different ways their show/film/

doc can look. When I worked on The Drowning TV series, there was an opening sequence at the start of each episode that was a flashback teaser to what may have happened, and it changed for each episode. Along with the DoP Richard Kendrick, we wanted to create a look that wasn't your typical, de-sat blurred edges look that often gets used for flashbacks. We played around with pushing hues slightly off, lifting the overall exposure, and adding in some different VFX elements that warped the edges of the image and separated the RGB channels slightly. I think I came up with about 4 different looks for that sequence before we chose what we liked and what also worked for the series. That is the really fun and creative side of colour grading.

In one of my first colour grading jobs back in Melbourne when I was working on personal side projects that often didn't have much budget, if at all. I remember in one particular scene, just grabbing the hue and swinging it in the opposite direction. What was supposed to be a yellow lit car park scene was now bright pink and as I sat there looking at it I felt, yeah this actually works and looks great. I decided to leave it in for the first viewing with the director and he loved it. It was that moment that made me realise how much you can manipulate an image and make it even better than was imagined and how much access you have to tools that can do this for a project.

### **How does grading for a documentary compare and contrast with a music video and a commercial with drama, for example?**

For a TV show or documentary, usually the client will want it looking natural, and just a nice balance that flows. There will be a lot of balancing of different cameras so at the front end of the grade session, the work is mostly making sure the whole thing feels cohesive and nothing jumps out at the viewer that looks off. But I feel like you can always add a touch of your own style to it, once the initial technical grade has been done. It might be leaning towards a cooler or warmer grade, or emphasising a particular tone

throughout...all depending on your taste, or what is approved by the client. There's still room to add stylistic elements to a job that also requires it to look natural.

For a TV drama series, you can really go for it with a style - and you will always have a discussion with the director and DOP beforehand about what they are looking for, you may even have the time to have a pre-grade session. Last year working on a TV drama with DOP Paddy Jordan, we were able to do that and settled on a cooler, low contrast look for the show 'The Woman in the house across the street'. I loved how it turned out and it was great working with Paddy and the director Dominic Le Clerc on the grade.

For a music vid, there is usually a strong look already planned out, but you can really push it as well. I sometimes like to start a music grade session with a 'let's see where it goes' attitude and then pull back from anything that feels too pushed in a wrong direction.

With commercials - you usually have the time to dig into the finite details and give each image a lot of work but there's a lot more pressure to get the job done within a certain amount of hours.

### **What are your ambitions? What are the sort of projects that you are keen to work on?**

Now that I have cut my teeth in the long form world of TV drama and docu-series, I'd absolutely love to work on a feature film. Ireland really does have so much talent, from actors to writers and production in general. After last year's international awards run, I really feel like that's going to continue and I'd love to play my small part in that by adding the colour-magic to some of those film productions in Ireland. There is great talent in the post-industry here too and I feel really grateful to be part of that.

I just really love this job and want to continue on this path for a long time and continue to be creative and work on lots of different projects.



Our 2023 General Assembly took place on Friday 10th November 2023 from 16:00 to 18:30 (CEST) at the Denmark National Film School with 54 participants (in person and online) and we were together for over two and a half hours talking about things that matter not only for TEMPO as an organization, but for all of us, film editors.

And not only did we have the opportunity to meet our fellow representatives, but over the course of the next two days, we met incredible editors talking about their lives and their work process, opening up their timelines and their hearts to a crowd full of professional editors and students from around the world. What a rewarding experience!

## New Board

So many people have applied this year. Our election was a real success. We have the following team for the next 2 years:

Alejo Santos (Argentina)  
 Are Syvertsen (Norway)  
 Job ter Burg (The Netherlands) - 2nd Chairperson  
 Julie Dupré (France)  
 Karina Vilela (Brazil)  
 Michelle Tesoro (USA) - 1st Chairperson  
 Özcan Vardar (Turkey)  
 Sarah McTeigue (Italy)  
 Sebastián Hernández (Colombia)

The new board have already had their first meeting and decided who is the 1st and 2nd chairperson. They are now watching the dailies and will get back to you when they have a rough cut! And a round of applause to the committed members of the former board who dedicated so much time and energy to getting TEMPO to where it is today:

Alexander Berner (Germany)

Baptiste Saint-Dizier (France)  
 Cacho Briceño (Venezuela)  
 Charles Godin (Belgium)  
 Giusy Naitana (Denmark)  
 Grace Pandolfo (Italy)

We wish them all the best in the world in this new phase and we will make sure they are always close to us (because we love them so much and cannot let them go!).

## New Members

Let's send our warmest hellos to Japan, Ireland, Croatia and Kenya for joining TEMPO this year! It's so good to see all these countries joining our Federation. This just ensures that together we are stronger! And in this spirit, a new task force was created with the aim of helping countries without editor's associations, to create one. We've temporarily called it "Lost Editors in Space" - there's no better name to describe how we feel when we're not surrounded by people who understand what we do, right?

At the IFEF in November of 2022 we learned that Turkish editor Erhan Örs was imprisoned for his editing of a documentary that was deemed to be critical of the government. Here's the email update from Özcan with the good news...

*"Hello everyone, I hope you are all fine. As you might have known, after spending 7 months in prison, Erhan was released last year with some limitations on his freedom, including a ban on travelling abroad. His case was not finished. Today, the last court took place for the final decision and he acquitted by court of law and he is now totally free !!! Thank you all again for all of your support Özcan"*

# JOB TER BURG FILM EDITOR

Dutch editor with a career spanning nearly thirty years chats to us.

## ISE

**I wanted to start with how you got started in film.**

### Job Ter Burg

There were two things that I was mostly toying with as a kid. The first was audio; I did radio plays and stuff like that, and I was DJing, and cutting up music on quarter inch tape and that kind of stuff. That was one part of what I liked doing, and the other one's done in school. I was into acting in the school plays and I always had like a fascination for movies and television, but it just didn't occur to me that that would be like something you could work at. And then I went to Utrecht to study theatre, film and television studies, which is mostly a theoretical college course, but they also had facilities and some courses. And there, I took some filmmaking courses, and that immediately clicked, especially editing. I recall the day where the instructors for that course told us about how video editing worked: it was like, yeah, that's sort of the thing that I've been looking for. And I recalled the instructor saying, "Yeah, editing, that's a really cool thing. I just couldn't do that all my life being in a dark room and behind the screens, cutting stuff", and I was like, yeah, that's sort of feels like what I should be doing.

## ISE

**I think a lot of people who read who read this will be not familiar with what the industry is like in the Netherlands. So when you were starting out, when you left college, where do you go? What were the job prospects for an editor in the Netherlands at the time?**



### Job Ter Burg

I was in an extremely lucky position that, first of all, we have the film school in Holland, Netherlands Film Academy, which takes a limited amount of students so they're selecting talented people who have already done some stuff. It's a pretty small school; I think, in my year, we had maybe seven or eight directing students for scripted, seven or eight for documentary and then probably around ten or twelve editors. Those would work on projects within these little crews so it was like a mini industry. People coming from that school are

generally considered to be very capable, so they are employable.

In 1992, I think we had one of the worst years in Dutch film ever: the percentage of movie tickets sold for Dutch films was at its lowest rate in history. Around that time, there was a whole lobby to incentivise and revitalise the industry, so there were all these programs being set up.

Several broadcasters had these programs where they started making low budget, half hour or one hour films for television, for young talent. There were low budget feature film projects being set up where they would do six low budget feature films every year, where a whole lot of people could submit their ideas that would be selected and then funded, etc. And at the same time they had set up this production incentive; it was a tax scheme where people who invested in film could have some tax benefits. So there was a lot of money and effort pumped into the industry, right in the years that we were in film school. By the time we graduated all those initiatives were starting to pay off.

There was a lot of low budget stuff being made, there were a lot of chances for people starting out, for young people to get their feet on the ground and sink their teeth into some project. At the same time, because of the money that was flowing into the existing industry, everyone who was already experienced all of a sudden found themselves flooded with work. So that meant that I got to do some low budget things, and even relatively mid budget stuff. I did some scripted stuff, and then I did features relatively quickly. I've also done a lot of documentary work for television. That was all basically through people I'd met in school, who then brought me on board projects they did that they needed more people on.

## ISE

**It sounds like a community really?**

## Job Ter Burg

Yes. I mean, it's a very small industry. I can't compare it

to the Dublin one, because I don't know it that well, but I think your country may be even smaller than mine. I just think your film industry might be a little bigger. It's not that big an industry and there were a lot of talented people, there were a lot of opportunities. So I was in a lucky place. I think the Dutch industry has a huge focus on emerging talent like new fresh faces, maybe even might be a little over focused on trying to find the latest newest talent out there. But that's also good

## ISE

**Do you think that means that maybe people who as they get experienced, need to look further afield because the opportunities are for new people in the Netherlands?**

## Job Ter Burg

I think it's a combination. On the one hand, there is a focus on young talent, which I think is good. But also the means available for production are relatively limited. Holland is not a country that spends a lot of money on culture. It's just not in our nature, we're merchants. So the funds are somewhat limited. That also means that there is a certain type of movie that you can make. And I was lucky enough to be part of an era where there were various opportunities for people to make more expensive films. And I'm not saying that expensive films are necessarily better, it's just that if your maximum budget like is two and a half million euros, you can't make a medieval epic. It's just too costly. So it means that experienced filmmakers somehow gets stuck doing the stuff they've already been doing. And that means that if, at some point if you're an experienced filmmaker, whether you're a director or a cinematographer, or an editor, whatever, you might start to want to branch out a little bit and see what else there is.



**ISE**

**Well, I think you definitely can say that you did that because you started working a few years ago with Paul Verhoeven. How did that come about?**

### **Job Ter Burg**

Well, that was in a period when there was a huge boom in the industry, and Paul was doing his Black Book film which was produced by a producer I knew. They started with an editor, and it didn't really work out. I think it was a British editor that they had to have, because of financing reasons. And then that producer said to Paul, listen, I know, a couple of people in Holland who I think can do a better job than this guy that we have now. And Paul said, "I don't believe that." And then the producers said something crazy; he said, "Okay, so what if these two guys that I think can do it, we give them the footage for this scene, we ask them to cut it. You'll have a look at it. If you think it sucks just

ignore the whole thing. If one of them comes back with something you like, let's talk." So then he called me. I thought he's never gonna get somebody from Holland to do that, but I would very much like to sink my teeth into some Paul Verhoeven footage, I'd be happy to cut it. I figured, yep, that's the very least I can get from this chance, right? I was expecting a couple of hours of footage: I got six and a half hours of dailies, for like a huge sequence that I spent pretty much a week on. And then I just sent it in, and figured, well, we'll see what happens. Two days later, they gave me the call and said, Paul would really like you to cut the movie. Fantastic. Just to be clear, there's a dual credit on that movie. It's me and James Herbert, but James is not the fired editor. James Herbert is the British editor brought on because we had suffered from a delay with the with the exit of the previous editor.



**ISE**

**You obviously obviously did okay, because you've done quite a bit with Paul Verhoeven since.**

## Job Ter Burg

Yeah, we just had a total click that was the great thing.

## ISE

**You were obviously familiar with him already because he is Dutch. So you were excited, but was it also very scary?**

## Job Ter Burg

Abso-f\*\*\*\*g-lutely!! Paul told me, whatever has been cut, ignore it. I want you to start fresh from everything. I want you to cut the movie from scratch. He left me alone for a couple of weeks, then came to my studio and it was first time he was actually in the studio. And then, at some point, I had to press play on the damn machine and I remember thinking oh my god,



this could be the end. Paul is a very collaborative filmmaker. He can be demanding and tough and intense and whatnot but I mean always about the movies; it's not about ego or whatever. It's very much



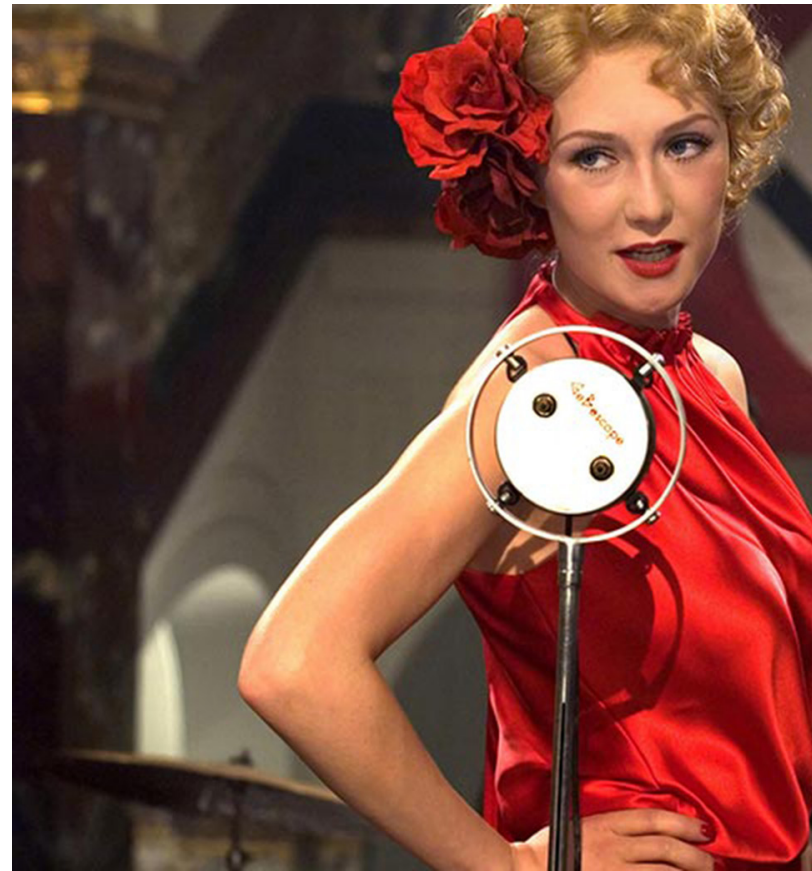
about the work. He will absolutely tell you if he thinks something is shit, or doesn't work. But he will also tell you if he think it's great and will want to try out stuff. One of the things I've really learned from him, especially on Black Book, is that once you have something that really works well try and reverse your point of view on the scene. Not the point of view in the scene, but like, if you're playing it in one way, like you hit the close ups halfway through, then what happens if you start with a close up and halfway through the you go to the wide. It's a very poor example but just like reversing the original idea just to tease yourself. He always says that it's like, based on Hegel, right, so thesis and antithesis. You have something, you need to sort of get the opposite of it. And then to see where the truth is, right? So he likes to oppose himself, and challenge his own ideas. During Elle we had the feeling the film was too long, and it was a little unclear where we could and should cut it. We start working on some ideas to trim it down and get it into a better

shape, leaving out some scenes, compressing some stuff. We've been working on it for maybe eight days, trying to squeeze out twelve minutes.

I had these whiteboards with picture cards for each scene so you could have an overview of what was there in the film, and also what was taken out on the sideboard. And he turns to the board, he said, Okay, so what did we take out? Let's go through all the cards that we took out. Okay, so let's put all of those back for the screening tomorrow. I was like, but wait, we've just started working towards getting this into a slimmer shape. Now we should see how it plays. He said, I've seen how the plays, we've proven to ourselves that we can do this. I just want to see everything back in the way it was one more time. And then if there's anything that I particularly like during the screenings tomorrow that I may not want to omit, or that is asking for a second chance that will challenge me. That was fascinating to me; a little weird, but it did help. And the great thing was that he was also right about it, because it ended up that one of the scenes we took out came back in. And we ended up taking out a totally different piece.



And that was only just because we gave it that second chance. That's just what's great about working with him.



## ISE

**You're working on the moments with an American director on an American film. Is that a very different experience to working on European films like *Elle* and *Benedetta*.**

## Job Ter Burg

Yeah, to me it is. It mostly has to do with like, from a production point of view, everything is way more organized. On European films, I do a lot of stuff myself, I usually have assistants do the syncing and logging for me, and then after that, I won't have an assistant. On many of the films I did over the last few years, I even was my own VFX editor which drove me crazy from time to time because of the increasing amount of visual effects in every goddamn thing we do. Now when I send out a scene on Friday, if there is a couple of plates that I can lock at noon, I send it off to my



assistants, and one of them will prep it, add the right numbers and everything and take care of all the elements, pull the EDL etc, and make sure that the



VFX house gets all of that. Then I can just continue cutting, which is important with this schedule, because it's not the most flexible schedule we have. That saves so much time and lets me just stay in the creative process of getting the scenes in and the reels in great shape.

## ISE

**Do you find a noticeable difference between American cinema and European cinema in terms of your own craft or the approach that you have?**

## Job Ter Burg

Not so much because I don't know, maybe that's a thing I can better answer in a couple of years, I've done one film that was produced predominantly in the UK, the *Informer* that was also slightly different. But that

was a relatively low budget film. So we didn't have all those people around then either I did a lot of that stuff myself as well. On a creative level that was very much the same to me as how I would work with any director in Holland, or in France or in Belgium or whatever, just didn't feel that different to me. The job is to interpret the footage, right? And then interpret the scenes you cut from it. We are responding to images and sound on screen and constructing them in a way that we think makes sense, and does justice and a lot of that is not even rational. A lot of that is from the gut. And that just doesn't really change. Right?

## ISE

**You spent a couple of months working here in Dublin - how did you find that?**

## Job Ter Burg

I absolutely loved being in Ireland. I loved working in Dublin. I have to say that everybody from the US who came to Dublin to work there is sorely missing it. It's like it's a thing that's being discussed like daily. The other day I was I was joking to the director that there was something that we'll just have to go back to Dublin and reshoot, and there was a very brief moment of, yeah, could we really do that? Because she really misses it. It was like, such a professional level of working and such great people. It was just the people were kind and nice and welcoming, and very, very good at their jobs. So I yeah, I feel privileged to having been able to come over and work there for two months and enjoy the hell out of that.



# RECOMMENDED READING

*Cut to the Chase by Sam O'Steen*



There can be no doubt that the meaning of the phrase “cut to the chase” as we understand it today derives from silent era Hollywood. The first printed reference to the expression comes from script direction from the 1930 novel *Showgirl* in Hollywood:

*“Jannings escapes... Cut to the chase.”*

It is therefore an entirely appropriate title for this book. Sam O'Steen's life and career spans the history of cinema — his first mentor in the cutting room had worked on silent films. He worked in the studio system; as that fell apart he was cutting films for the new independent directors and he finished out his career working on the then new computer editing

software.

Born in 1923 his family moved from Arkansas to California when he was five, driven west by the Depression and the hopes of a better life. Sam grew up poor and as a boy he sold newspapers on the Warner Bros. Studio lot. He'd hang around the cutting room of Owen Marks (who would go on to cut *Casablanca*, *Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, and *White Heat*), watching him work on a Moviola, and it was then that the seed was sown

*“I said ‘Jeez, you guys get paid for watching movies?’ He said, ‘That’s right.’ I said ‘Boy, that’s what I want to do.’”*

After leaving school he got a job as a messenger at Warners, and after a spell in the Coast Guard during the war he returned to Hollywood to follow his dream of becoming an editor. It took a further ten years, and at the age of thirty he became an apprentice. He quickly progressed from there to Assistant Editor and it wasn't long before he was offered a film to cut. The opportunity came from veteran director Delmer Daves but Sam was bound by the rules of union system which meant he couldn't edit until he had spent eight years as an assistant. He only had four years done and it just wasn't possible. Four years later, to the day, his phone rang; it was Delmer Daves...

*he said "You ready now?" I said "Yeah, I'm ready." "Well," he said, "you got a picture"*

Sam's first film as editor was in 1964 for Warner Bros. Two years later he cut *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* for Mike Nichols. He received his first of three Oscar nominations for that film. From there his credit list reads like a potted history of cinema: *Cool Hand Luke*, *The Graduate*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *Catch 22*, *Chinatown*, and on and on and on.

It's quite a career and this book makes for a fascinating trip through those films. Distilled from interviews with his wife Bobbie, the book retains the conversational format, with each chapter a series of questions and answers and very little additional context beyond the films themselves. While it purports to be a book about editing, it rarely gets into the level of detail for which a lot of us might be hoping. It does however go through almost every film that he worked on in his career, and it makes for an excellent viewing companion too for films like *The Graduate*. There are fascinating insights to be had into how the studio system worked and how it came undone, and there are plenty of brushes with fame: John Wayne and Frank Sinatra feature early on, and there's a cameo from Orson Welles that certainly strengthens

the conceit of this as a history of film. There's a lot of parties, lots of glamour, lots of girls and at least one gratuitous mention of his Ferrari.

Sam was on location with a number of big films, and as always the tales of the troubled productions are the most entertaining. The chapter on *Catch 22* gives a great view of the challenges of filming such a huge production on location in Mexico for four months. When Dino DeLaurentis decided on Bora Bora as the location for *Hurricane* the entire production relocated to the small island a hundred miles from Tahiti. Inevitably there are tensions and entanglements and Sam certainly doesn't feel that any discretion is necessary. It's hard to know if he's wilfully indiscreet or just enjoys a gossip, but either way I can't imagine Mia Farrow enjoyed reading this chapter.

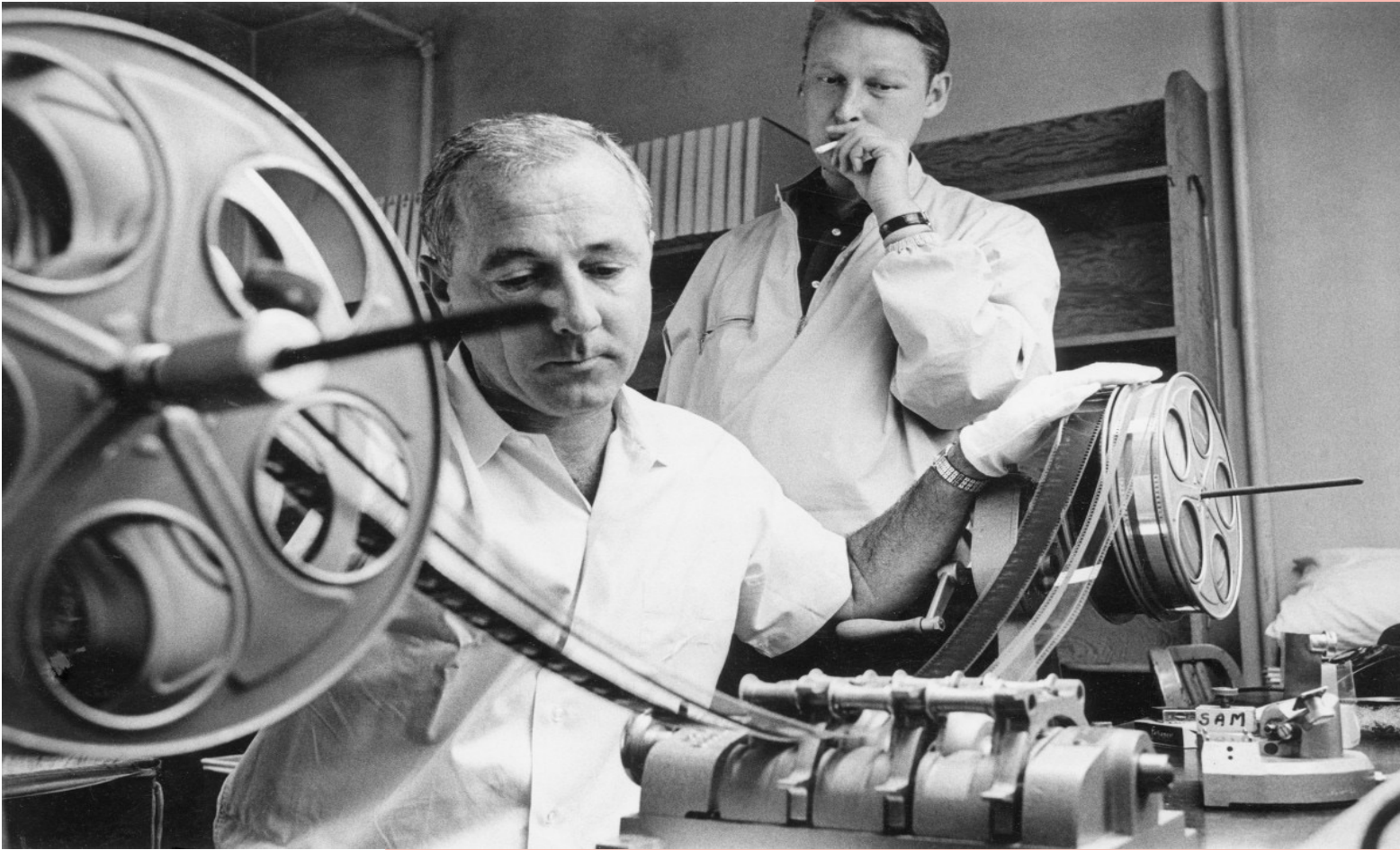
One sour note I found though was the lack of any reflection on Roman Polanski. Sam cut a number of films with him, and they were clearly very friendly, so it comes as little surprise that he doesn't have any condemnation for Polanski. In 1980 he went to France to work on *Tess* with Polanski; the language in the book at this point tells its own story:

*[Bobbie O'Steen] Polanski was in Paris because of that sex scandal. He still cannot return to the US without risking imprisonment. How do you feel about that?*

*[Sam O'Steen] I hate it. I mean, come on, enough is enough. And I was always convinced it was about money*

*[Bobbie O'Steen] That the girl's family blackmailed him?*

*[Sam O'Steen] Of course I don't know that, but that's what it's usually about.*



It could be argued that Sam is a product of a less enlightened time and had an attitude to “that sex scandal” that was informed by chauvinistic views more accepted in the 1970s, but this interview was done not long before his death in 2000, so clearly he had not reflected much on the story in the intervening years. It’s a pity that such a canny editor didn’t consider that his own view of the event might be better left on the cutting room floor.

Content warning aside, and it’s also worth noting that some of the language is, to be charitable, anachronistic, this is a very enjoyable book. It gives a real insight into the life of an extremely successful editor in Hollywood; one that never lost perspective on the world he had chosen

What do you say when you remind people not to take this crazy, wonderful business too seriously?

It’s only shadows on the walls.

Cut to the Chase is available through the usual online retailers, or borrow a copy; you definitely know an editor that has this on their shelf!

**Eoin McDonagh**

# WORKING FROM HOME

*A run in with a few homely editor types.*



In recent years, the popularity of remote work has surged, driven by the Covid-19 pandemic and advancements in technology that enable various industries to reduce their dependence on centralised offices. As the initial rush to work from home post-pandemic subsides, many industries are now seeking the optimal balance between a centralised office environment and remote work.

Historically, the concept of working from home was not a practical option for editors and post-production professionals. The substantial volume of media and the necessity to screen and collaborate with directors, producers, and other creatives made the idea of working from an editing suite in one's back garden or home office financially prohibitive and impractical for many. However, recent improvements in home wifi capabilities, enhanced file transfer tools, and the availability of streaming and remote desktop services have transformed the

feasibility of remote work for editors, making it a much more viable reality.

Daniel Greenway, for one, appreciates the producers' increasing openness to allowing editors to work from home. Greenway is a BAFTA and RTS Award-nominated British drama editor with credits that include *The Crown*, *The Terror*, and *Humans*. Most recently, he edited *The Crown*'s final episode, "Sleep, Dearie Sleep," a lot of which he assembled in his house in Hitchin, just outside London.

"I'm in a separate building, we've got a garage that's been converted into an office so it's completely separate from the house. It's really nice to get to walk out of the house and shut the door and get fresh air. It's my own space and I've got really nice kit set up now that I miss whenever I go into town and have to use the rented stuff."



Jeremy Briers, ISE aka Jayce works from his house in Youghal, Cork. Jayce was born in the UK and spent most of his career working in South Africa before moving to Ireland in 2016. He has edited hundreds of hours of television, and his credits include Zulu Wedding and Jewel.

"We never planned to live in Ireland. Being born in the UK I had always planned to move back there some day but my wife was South African and UK spousal immigration regulations were such a nightmare that we moved to Ireland while we waited for the visa. We loved it so much we ended up staying and have been here for just over 7 years."

What in particular made him choose Youghal?

"We didn't choose Youghal, Youghal chose us! We looked for places all over Ireland and the only agent who ever got back to me was an agent in Youghal."

90% of the productions that Jayce works on are produced outside of Ireland.

"It can get a bit crazy at times. Over Christmas 2022 I had 3 jobs all come in at the same time due to production issues. There were a couple of weeks where I was tunnelling into a clients computer in New York doing a 10 hour shift on Avid and then logging into an older client in South Africa for 10 hours working in Premiere then on the weekend doing a Netflix gig on my own system in FCPX.

I do not recommend it.



Are there any downsides to editing from home for Greenway?

"Yeah, it's fun to be with the director and to get lunch and a beer occasionally. And to mingle with other editors is really important. So ideally, for the fine cut at least, the ideal model is to work for two or three days a week centrally and then have a couple of days working from home on the notes. I'd love to do that. But while the director is shooting and I'm assembling the episode, I prefer to work exclusively from home. I'm always pushing for that kind of model. That would be ideal.

I've always had some sort of a setup at home. When

I was starting out I was always cutting shorts from home, doing a lot of freebies. So I've been editing at home since I started out, really." But it was on *The Widow*, an Amazon Prime series starring Kate Beckinsale and Charles Dance, when Greenway first encountered working from home on a bigger scale.

The *Widow* was shot in South Africa and we had a South African assistant who would be sending back rushes each day. So she would send me the rushes and the bins. That was where I first adopted the system of manually copying folders of .mxr media back and forth between the editor and the assistant on a secure file share system such as Aspera."

**G**reenway's preferred system involves manually renaming or "locking off" Avid MediaFiles MXF folders and then sharing between various edit suites.

"You do have to be quite technically precise because ideally, if you want to be able to pop from your home office into the edit suite in London, or you want your assistant to do a playout, you just want to have a mirror of your media on that computer. So you need everything to be labelled, date every folder so that you can immediately see if you're missing something, and every time that you want to playout, you will need to send your renders and to date your renders so that everything is online for the assistant. It requires a lot of discipline from people at both ends.

When this system breaks down it can get complicated very quickly. Recently I've done some documentaries which involved sharing media with the director at home. We used this system and we'd find out weeks later that there were bits missing. So you've got to be pretty organised."

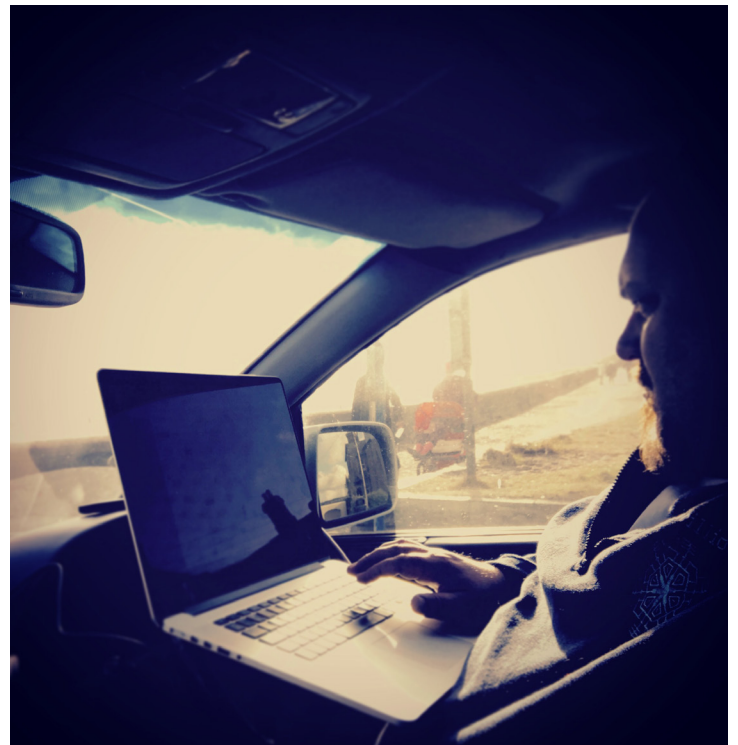
**J**ayce's first big remote job was in 2016.

"I was still in South Africa at the time and I owned a post facility with about 5 edit suites, a colouring

grading room and 2 final mix suites as well as a few people working with me. When the opportunity arose to move back to the UK it was half way through a production of 13 episodes of scripted drama for TV. I had to make assurances to my client that working remotely would not hinder the show. I did extensive testing with proxies and workflows beforehand. Our initial workflow was having an assistant generate proxies and dropbox them to me.

In the UK we moved around a lot. So we had a challenge in making the files small enough to work over lousy rural wifi. At one point I was abusing McDonalds wifi so much that I felt guilty and had to go across the road to Pizza Hut.

When I first moved to Youghal I was using mobile 3G and a laptop in my car close to the 3G tower."



**M**anaging media becomes one of the most complicated tasks when working from multiple locations. In recent years, a variety of services and systems have emerged to assist editors and productions with their offsite media management. One of the most popular among these services is SalonSync, invented by Salon co-owners

Nick Long and Nic Castle in the initial weeks following the onset of Covid. They were set a daunting challenge by the producers of The Great British Bake Off.

"We had always provided kit hire to GBBO but the producers came to us with a challenge and said 'Look, it's a secret at the moment but the nation needs Bake Off more than ever to get everyone out of the gloom of Covid! How can we link up all our editors across the UK on varied internet from a few mb to a few Gb...and also our facility Nexis. The traditional methods of remoting in would have worked for some but about half, at the time, had such bad connectivity that our system was the only way. With the editors on poor connections they could use the night time to get rushes, it all comes through automatically; and then edit during the day. The only other option would have been sending hard drives but most of the edits were split between loads of very far flung places so it just would have been cost prohibitive, it's fairly fast turnaround and all editors switch between eps so sending hard drives would have been an issue

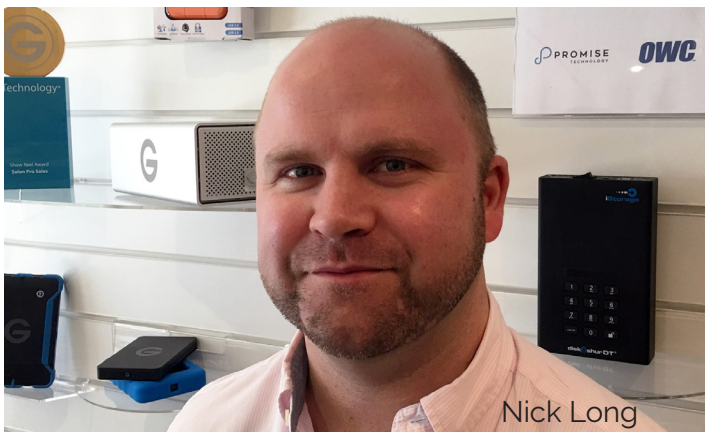
purely as the box people! We at Salon offer a whole host of solutions from SalonSync through to remote access (Teradici/Jump Desktop and cloud based edit stations), it all very much comes down to workflow, what editors prefer and most importantly now connectivity."



Connectivity is definitely one of the biggest issues.

"I have 2 x 1 gig fibre lines coming into the house." says Jayce "I am currently working on a show of 6x20 minute episodes of scripted TV drama. It's shot in anamorphic on the Sony Venice with the X-OCN Codec. Proxies are created in camera and they are ProRes 422HQ so it's 32 terabytes and counting but we are going strong."

"I pay for business broadband," says Greenway "A lot of the domestic broadband operators offer good download speeds but you want to make sure that if you need to upload something that the upload speeds are good also. You can run into problems at certain times of the day if you need to upload something to the assistant or to stream on Evercast or another streaming platform."



SalonSync grew from there "We currently service clients in the America's, across Europe, Australia and even South Korea. We have around 20 SalonSync boxes in Ireland at the moment, of all various sizes. Last year we installed our first SalonSuperSync in Dublin which is 288TB of storage, it's a big project and it will link to editors in many locations.

One thing I have always said is SalonSync is not the only solution and we don't want to become known



**N**ot getting the best internet package is also the number 1 mistake made by editors working remotely in Nick Long's opinion.

"Connectivity has become one of the most fundamental tools of the trade now so where possible people need to make sure they have the best and most reliable package at home."

**T**ime management is something that many editors (and, let's face it, producers) have always struggled with, and working from home can often make this challenge more difficult.

"I, like many of us, have trouble saying no to jobs" says Jayce "But I try not to take on too much work. The main advantage to not being in a suite somewhere, I think, is that my time is more my own so if I have to nip off to do a personal errand then I can do that. The disadvantage is that sometimes it feels like I am always working as the office is right next to the bedroom."



**G**reenway is keen to point out that each production is very different and requires a different mindset.

"I try to make it clear, when talking to the director and the producers at the beginning of the the job, that this is what I ideally like to do. And I just say that I work fast and that I use the time well. I make sure that my assemblies are well finessed. And if you're on the level, people will respect you a lot more if you're honest and upfront about how you like to work."

**O**n a production like "Suspicion," an Apple TV+ project on which Greenway worked for two years amidst the challenges of Covid, Daniel had little other options. From March 2020 until the final picture lock in 2022, Daniel worked exclusively from home. Director and showrunner Chris Long was content providing notes on the cuts through streamed

viewings on Evercast and by watching Quicktimes and providing written notes.

"I like to take notes, and then spend time trying things out on my own and trying different things, having that time to come back and re-watch and come up with new ideas. And it actually worked quite well without having someone sat there in the room with me on Suspicion, and Chris enjoyed working this way also. But depending on the people involved; and for screenings in particular; it can be better to be in the room and to get a feel of the atmosphere ."

**C**hris Long stands in contrast with Peter Morgan, writer and showrunner on The Crown.

"Peter likes to drop in and just say 'show me something'. And then just watch and respond. And he does that while you're assembling. So that is not great for something if you're not ready. So you've always got to have stuff up your sleeve that's ready to be viewed. He really likes editing, because he thinks it's closer to writing."





Does Jayce ever think he'll ever go back?

"I have just finished a short film with a friend of mine. I went over to London for the shoot and afterwards she came over for a couple days and sat in the 'edit suite'. And that's what I miss. That direct connection with the director in a room. There have been a few occasions where I have thought about relocating to Dublin or thereabouts (I am not planning on leaving Ireland any time soon!!!) but I lay down until the feeling passes. I am happy to continue working this way as long as I can but yeah, I really do miss the room. On the other hand, there's a director from South Africa who I have worked with for almost 14 years now and over the last few years we've finished 3 features and 4 TV shows together, all remotely from my humble little seaside suite."



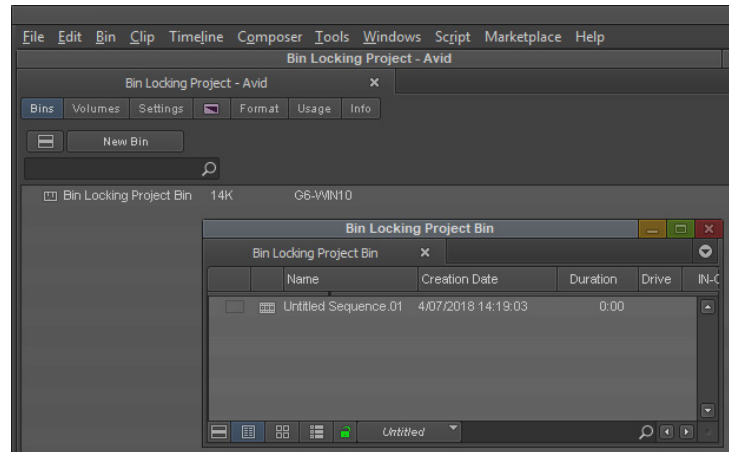
# THE LOCKING OFF METHOD

A Word About Avid's Media Management System

Love it or hate it (I refuse to get into another Avid vs Premiere vs FCP argument), Avid has a very specific way of organising its media, which really hasn't changed that much since the company first started producing NLEs in the early '90s.

The system involves creating individual proxies for each piece of media that the NLE works with and storing them in a folder on the hard drive or shared network space. The path for these files is always Avid MediaFiles/MXF. There is a slight difference in how Avid works on a shared network or NEXIS, but in general, it creates a folder once every couple of thousand files and names them 1, 2, 3, etc.

Each time that you create a new file in Avid, a proxy of that file is created (and wrapped, using a file format known as .mxf) into the Avid MediaFiles/MXF/1 folder. There are two files inside the 1 folder that tell the Avid what is in the folder. They are known as the media database files. Once the 1 folder is full, it is updated to 2, and the process starts again. This makes it very easy for the Avid to understand what files it has at its disposal because



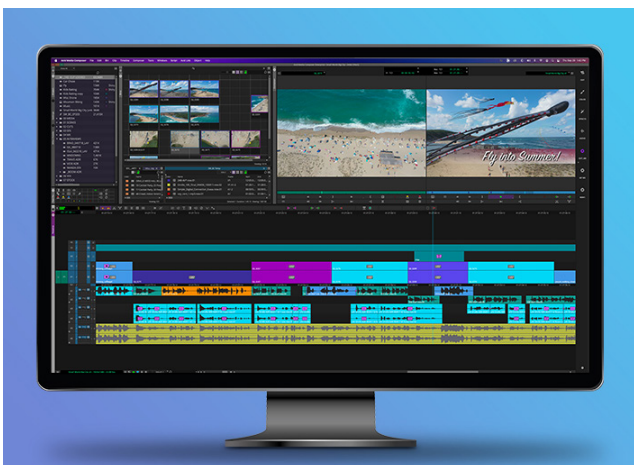
all it has to do is check the media databases in a very specific location on each hard drive

The locking off method takes advantage of the Avid's sturdy file management system but also allows you to be more organised in your file management.

It is always good housekeeping to have separate partitions for the different types of media that you have. Rushes, Music and Renders should, ideally, be kept on separate partitions on your hard drive or shared network.

When you wish to share the next iteration of media from any of these partitions, the editor or assistant just needs to change the name of the 1 folder into something else. A good rule of thumb is to include the name of the production, the date and the person who's media it is (I also like to make sure that the folders are alphabetical). Once the folder has been renamed, this essentially locks the contents of that folder in place.

**Shane Woods**



# REALLY USEFUL STUFF

What we all need is another gear review right? Below are listed some rather essential products we could all use in our daily lives. Starting off with the most essential piece of kit in my humble opinion, a great chair. Secretlab.eu offer some very very



good chairs as well as an extremely useful standing/sitting desk. The chairs are designed to exacting standards and are ideal for sedentary jobs like ours. Hard wearing and ergonomically sound, they come in 3 different sizes and in a range of finishes. The big selling point is that the chairs can be fitted out with a 'skin' of your choice and offer a wide range of designs. Not cheap but definitely worth it. I have had one for about 4 years now and it is still a brilliant chair.

A great addition to any editing setup is a control surface. Whether it's a specially designed keyboard or a dedicated panel there's a piece of kit to help you speed up your workflow and make your life a little easier. While Avid and Premiere Pro don't have dedicated control surfaces the products on offer from

Editorskeys cover the main four professional NLEs. Designed for Avid, Prem Pro, Resolve and FCPX Editorskeys have a range of wired and wireless keyboards built with the standard keyboard shortcuts as the keys.



BlackMagicDesign have a range of colour panels but recently updated their product range with a couple of editor control keyboards.



And finally my personal favourite edit suite addition is the Loupedeck CT. It can be used with most NLEs as well as a host of apps outside the edit realm, with pages dedicated to Safari, Lightroom, Photoshop, Spotify, LogicPro etc. It's the most useful piece of kit I have ever bought.



**Jeremy Briers**

# THE BACK PAGE



When Adobe Premiere crash for the 5th time in the same day but you somehow manage to recover the last version of the project

