



# The Hollywood Report

The Official Newsletter of Emerson College Los Angeles



## FACULTY NOTES

**Jennifer Vandever**, our screenwriting professor, has two screenplays currently in development, [Helen of Troy](#) and [Do Right Man](#), which won her the 2004 Page International Screenwriting Award for comedy. Her first novel, [The Bronte Project](#), was published by Shaye Areheart Books, a division of Random House, in October 2005, and she is currently hard at work on its follow-up.

**Paul Mandelbaum**, who teaches our "L.A. Stories" literature class, is the author of a novel-in-stories, [Garrett in Wedlock](#), which won the 2005 Baltimore Book Festival's Literary Award for Fiction, and his follow-up novel, [Adriane on the Edge](#), will be published in December 2005 by Berkley Books. He is also the editor of the anthology [12 Short Stories and Their Making](#), which contains interviews he has conducted with a prominent list of contributors, including Tobias Wolff, Sandra Cisneros, and Jhumpa Lahiri.

Talent manager and entertainment publicist **Brad Lemack**, our Business of Acting and Entertainment & Interactive PR professor, recently completed his Masters in Theater Arts and Dance degree from California State University, Los Angeles. His first book, [The Business of Acting](#), continues to be a bestseller among the acting community. He is currently working on a second book, [Kids and the Business of Acting: A Guidebook for Parents](#), as well as the posthumous biography of Emmy award-winner Isabel Sanford, his friend and former client. He contributed to the book for the musical [BARK!](#), which opened at the Chicago Center for the Performing Arts in October.

**Kay Cole**, one of the newest additions to our faculty, was in the original Broadway cast of [A Chorus Line](#). She is the director and choreographer of [BARK!](#), a play currently running at the Coast Playhouse in West Hollywood. In addition to teaching film and television acting classes at the L.A. Center, Kay is also working on a play production of [Sexual Perversity in Chicago](#), and [Wild Women Blues](#), a concert that will be performed in Hamburg, Germany.

## Greetings from Emerson College Los Angeles Center

The Emerson Los Angeles Program is a semester-long experience for eligible juniors, seniors, and graduate students. It has been an ongoing academic program since the late 1980s and today is the premier residential program of its kind in Los Angeles. All students enroll in an internship, usually related to some facet of the entertainment industries, while also taking classes taught by scholars and working professionals. Students from across the College participate in this intensive and challenging semester and many remain to pursue careers in the Los Angeles area upon graduating.

The Emerson Los Angeles staff encourages students to explore the city and county of Los Angeles through sponsored programs and events. Whether through a hike in the Santa Monica mountain range, a night out on Sunset Boulevard, or a day at the beach, students have the opportunity to explore the wider range of experiences Los Angeles has to offer. Through a demanding academic curriculum, a vital field study at an internship site, and a broader opportunity to encounter the surrounding area, the Emerson Los Angeles Center provides an impeccable residential program that weaves together many threads of the Emerson educational experience. We hope you enjoy this newsletter.

Jim Lane  
Executive Director  
Emerson College Los Angeles Center

## Emerson College Los Angeles—What's it all about?

So you are heading to Los Angeles next semester and you don't quite know what to expect? Or maybe you are thinking of applying to the LA Program, but you're not sure if it's for you? Within the pages of this newsletter, you will find information that we hope will shed a bit more light on the Emerson Los Angeles Center and what it has to offer. You hold in your hands, the very first edition of this bi-annual newsletter, which includes interviews with current students and intern site supervisors as well as general happenings on the LA campus.

If you are thinking about participating in the Emerson Los Angeles Program, we encourage you to take some time to review these pages. While each student helps to create his or her own unique experience on the west coast, we believe that the more information you have, the better prepared you will be in taking the next step in your education.

We wish you the best of luck in making your decision and we look forward to meeting many of you in Los Angeles!

Kerri McManus  
Director of Internships & Student Services  
Emerson College Los Angeles Center

**IN THE BALLPARK:  
AN INTERVIEW WITH VISUAL EFFECTS PRODUCER  
CHRIS DEL CONTE**

Emerson alumnus Chris Del Conte is an effects producer and internship supervisor at Digital Dimension, an Emmy Award-winning CGI production studio here in Burbank. Digital Dimension has created high-end visual effects and motion graphics for such films as *The Last Samurai*, *Blade Trinity*, and *Elf*, as well as the television programs *Lost* and *Alias*. Their current projects are the sci-fi adventure *Zathura* and the 3-D Imax feature *Magnificent Desolation*. We caught up with Chris to learn more about his work, his experience with Emerson interns, and those all-important first years after graduation.



**Chris, tell us a little about your own experience in Hollywood. How did you get your start and how did you end up as an effects producer for such a great company?**

Well, I started as an Emerson intern myself. I interned with Boss Film Studios and realized visual effects was the thing for me. But my first job out of school was answering phones for a one-day event company, probably the furthest thing from effects. After a year there, I landed a job as an office PA for the sitcom *Ellen*, where I later became the post-production coordinator. Eventually, I found the opportunity to work my way back into visual effects with companies like Cinesite and Centropolis.

You have to be patient though. Think about it—it takes a doctor something like eight years before they can even touch a patient. It's the same trying to get where you want here. I've seen so many people give up and move back after just a few years. But the film industry is something you have to devote yourself to. The hours are long, they're hard, and sometimes the jobs you do are less than ideal. I was in my mid-twenties, throwing scripts over Ellen's (Degeneres) wall at two in the morning, so she could have the latest draft to read the next day. But hard work pays off. If you're dedicated and you put the work in, like anything else in life, you'll get something out of it.

**Along those lines, what is the internship program like here at Digital Dimension? What could an intern interested in visual effects hope to get out of their time here?**

It's a unique experience working at a small visual effects company. There are so many steps that go into the effects process that when an intern comes here, they're usually involved with all of them. An intern will start with basic work helping our production team. They'll learn our system in and out, and toward the middle (of the semester), once or twice a week, they'll spend time sitting with a 3D artist or with a paint person, or with a tracking person, gaining experience with each step of the process.

I expect a student wants to learn more than just how to get coffee at their internship, and because we're a smaller company, their time here can be much more hands-on. They'll learn about as much as they can handle.

**You've supervised a number of Emerson interns in semesters past. What characteristics embody a good intern?**

I look for students who are real go-getters. When I was an intern, I knew (this industry) always favored those who got their job done quickly and correctly. And after I finished my work, I always looked for other ways to help my supervisors out. When I interview a potential intern, I look for someone with that same type of energy, someone who wants to learn everything, someone who's here (in Hollywood) for a reason, and not just "trying things out."

**As you're probably aware, many of our students spend their last semester in the L.A. Program. What advice would you give to students getting ready to graduate? What does it take to "make it in this town?"**

Most people start as PAs, which is something I recommend. I was a PA for two years. I can't tell you how often what I learned as one has saved me since then. Climbing the ladder like that really helped me understand the bigger picture. You have to put your time in. It's like working in a ballpark. You don't just *jump* to being in charge of everything. No, by the time you're in charge, you've worked the ticket booth, you've run the soda stand, you've worked the popcorn machine, so that in the end you have a strong grasp on how everything works.

My advice is to learn all about the industry. Read the trades. Ask questions. Learn as much as you possibly can. You're a sponge—act like it!

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT SPRING 2005

The Emerson L.A. program offers a variety of internships in the communication and entertainment fields. Internship experiences can have both a general and an individual appeal, and we feel that it's important for students to keep us updated on their progress throughout the semester. Here are a few Emersonians who were good enough to share their thoughts...

KRISTEN BOATRIGT is a Broadcast Journalism major who did an internship at *Dateline NBC* in the Spring Semester. Let's check in and see how it went...

### **So what are your responsibilities as a *Dateline* intern?**

Lucky me, I actually get to do a lot of things at *Dateline*. So far, I have logged, dubbed, and time-coded tapes, researched stories on the internet and through phone calls, created tape lists, sat in on edits and screenings, and gone on shoots, among other things. I have gotten to meet a number of really great producers, editors, correspondents, and AP's. I also get to browse scripts and transcribe interviews.

### **Has your internship changed your opinion of broadcast journalism or reinforced it? How so?**

I don't really think that my internship has changed my opinion as much as it has broadened my view of the field. I never really thought much about documentary/news style reporting when I was back in Boston. I really like this format and I am glad that I got some experience in it.

### **What is the coolest thing that has happened at *Dateline* since you've been there?**

There have been a lot of cool things, but my favorite thing to do is go on shoots and see how work is done in the field. I went on one shoot where *Dateline* was doing a "survivor" story on a snowboarder that was lost for eight days and had to have his legs amputated. I was given the chance to meet this guy and go to one of his physical therapy sessions. My field producer described it as a b-roll shoot, but I found this guy so inspiring and his story was incredibly interesting to me.

### **What advice would you give students coming to the L.A. program?**

Make the most of it. I am at my internship a lot (the maximum amount of hours that I am allowed), but being here this much allows me to really get to know the people that I am working with and what they do. It also helps me to gain their trust so they come to me when they need something done, which can lead to some pretty cool opportunities now and in the future.

MICHAEL KORICH is a Theatre Studies major interning at Cheyenne Enterprises, the film development offices of Bruce Willis and producer Arnold Rifkin. What can an actor learn in a development office? Let's find out...

### **So, tell us, why did Cheyenne appeal to you as a good place to intern?**

I chose between Cheyenne and *Bold and the Beautiful*. *The Bold and the Beautiful* was a great opportunity, but I would have been working with 6 other interns in a very large office. At Cheyenne, I'm the only intern and all 12 people who work there know my name and ask me to do various tasks, even Arnold Rifkin. Also, Cheyenne produces both film and television, so it was a place I could learn more general information.

### **Has interning there changed your opinion of a film development office—or even the Industry at large—or has it reinforced it?**

Working there has definitely changed my opinion of development offices. I found out that communication is more important than creativity, or anything else for that matter. All the producers spend the majority of the time on the phone. Arnold's assistant, Justin, can only communicate via IM because he is always on conference calls. Marjorie, a vice president in the company, has been on set in New Orleans and New York, so I have never met her, but she knows who I am because I have done numerous conference calls with her. In general, I have found that talent is nice, but it's more important to be a cooperative and communicative individual.

### **What is the coolest thing that's happened at Cheyenne since you've been there?**

One of my bosses is Bruce Willis himself. Though he has been in the office a few times, I have never really been introduced to him. However, I do a lot of work for his assistant. One task was helping with invitations for his 50th birthday party. The guest list was huge and full of stars. I delivered invitations to the companies of Morgan Freeman, Mel Gibson, and Tom Hanks. Also, I have spoken with John Goodman on the phone and met Dick Donner.

### **What advice would you give students coming to the L.A. program?**

Relax and try not to be anxious. You will find an internship, you will be helpful, and you will gain more responsibility over time. When it looked like I was not going to get an internship, I had two interested in me when the deadline arrived. When I felt like I was only doing busy, menial tasks, they gave me the opportunity to fill in for the assistants and the office manager. Every time I would worry about something or become anxious, something good would happen if I just relaxed. Remember, this experience is educational, but it's not worth it if you don't enjoy yourself.

# Where Are They Now?

## Fall 2005 Students & Their Intern Sites

Jeremy Acker, *Storyline Entertainment*  
Sandra Amaro, *Swindle Magazine*  
John Andrews, *Moviola*  
Matthew Ardine, *FMW Casting*  
Tiffany Aug, *Moviola*  
Britt Augenfeld, *Fox Searchlight Pictures*  
Kathryn Barrett, *KABC-TV*  
Elizabeth Bates, *Jinks/Cohen*  
Ilaria Belisari, *Paramount Classics*  
Vanessa Bouvry, *June Beallor Productions*  
Janna Brown, *HBO Films*  
Maressa Brown, *Variety Magazine*  
Trevor Byrne, *2929 Entertainment*  
Jennifer Carey, *mPRm*  
Andrea Carroll, *Lions Gate Entertainment*  
Molly Casey, *Lions Gate Entertainment*  
Mark Chiancone, *Imagecraft*  
Charles Ciano, *Warner Strategic Marketing*  
Max Cross, *Radical Media/Music*  
Aaron Cruze, *Marc Platt Productions*  
Jonathan D'Ambrosio, *Face Productions*  
Andrea Dempsey, *M80 Services, Inc.*  
Ryan Dillon, *KPWR/Power-106*  
Lucy D'Olimpio, *Oil Factory*  
Sean Doyle, *Touchstone Television*  
Lance Drake, *Radical Media/Music*  
Timothy Duff, *Playtone Co.*  
Neil Evans, *Comedy Central*  
Aja Folino, *People Magazine-LA Bureau*  
Julia Foresman, *Working Title Films*  
Ryan Frame, *The Jim Henson Company*  
Marc Freitas, *Lions Gate Entertainment*  
Timothy Gagliardo, *Moviola*  
Tara Gallagher, *Odd Lot Entertainment*  
Aaron Galles, *The Ellen Degeneres Show*  
Nicole Gauthier, *Actuality Productions*  
Erika Goldfarb, *Focus Features*  
Celeste Green, *The Ellen Degeneres Show*  
Kathryn Haeusler, *20th Century Fox*  
Jennifer Harding, *Dreamworks SKG*  
Corey Harnois, *PEN USA*  
Vignette Hart, *Martin Literary Management*  
Jonathan Hoffman, *Mad TV*  
Michael Humphrey, *Tomorrow's Brightest Minds*  
Matthew Jacobson, *E-Ring*  
Nicole Knowles, *Swift River Productions*  
Olga Konanova, *Swift River Productions*  
Eva Konstantopoulos, *Lions Gate Entertainment*  
Justyna Kornacka, *Radical Media/Music*  
Christine Lanoie, *PEN USA*

Lucas Lee, *Danetracks*  
Kerri Lindstrom, *Atomik Pictures*  
Heather London, *Origin Talent*  
Briana Lynch, *LA Avengers*  
Karen Mann, *PEN USA*  
Meghan McAlduff, *Todd Phillips Co.*  
Alison McCarthy, *Look-Look*  
Patrick Mediate, *Marc Platt Productions*  
Erica Meyer, *Days Of Our Lives*  
Russell Meyer, *Benenson Janson Advertising*  
Jessica Miller, *Pie Town Productions*  
Patrick Mongeau, *Primetime Pictures*  
Kevin Muller, *Fortress Entertainment*  
Lauren Murgia, *Manage-ment*  
Matthew Murray, *Weed Road Pictures*  
Lucia Nazzaro, *The Ellen Degeneres Show*  
Eugeni Nikolov, *Partizan*  
Tiberius Nour, *Lions Gate Entertainment*  
Molly O'Keefe, *20th Century Fox*  
David Orosz, *New Regency Productions*  
Alexis Overocker, *Manage-ment*  
Jason Pachomski, *CSI: New York*  
Rachel Paiste, *Indie 103.1fm*  
Kathryn Pelton, *The Ellen Degeneres Show*  
Nathan Peters, *Authentic Entertainment*  
Aaron Pickus, *Sponsor IQ*  
Stephanie Pierce, *KIIS FM*  
Adam Poulin, *Thunder Road*  
Michael Price, *New Regency Productions*  
Joseph Provenzano, *Fortress Entertainment*  
Nathaniel Ramsey, *John Wells Productions*  
Jade Rezvani, *Double Nickel Entertainment*  
Peter Roy, *Warner Strategic Marketing*  
Tyler Ruggeri, *Focus Features*  
Lauren Schneider, *Anonymous Content*  
Cari Shanks, *Heidi Levitt Casting*  
Katharine Sherrer, *Focus Features*  
Sarah Simmons, *NBC Universal*  
Shira Storman, *RM 205*  
Gabrielle Strahl, *E! Entertainment Television*  
Patricia Sullivan, *Joey*  
Louie Tremblay, *Threshold Entertainment*  
Connor Twigg, *Fortress Entertainment*  
Lee Tyler, *Indie 103.1fm*  
Matthew Ward, *Capitol Records*  
Jared Watterworth, *Playtone Co.*  
David Webster, *Oil Factory*  
Grace Whitehouse, *Traction Media*  
Pearl Wible, *Scott Rudin Productions*  
Michael Wright, *Brick Entertainment*