

CANADIAN CINEMATOGRAPHER

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CINEMATOGRAPHERS

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THE
55TH
ANNUAL
CSC AWARDS GALA



Brad Rushing csc • Masters POV Conference

THE 55TH ANNUAL CSC AWARDS GALA



“WAS IT A
HIGHWAY
TO HELL?”

ONLY PAUL
BRONFMAN
KNOWS FOR
SURE!

By Guido Kondruss

While the CSC awards gala may have been given a new name this year, it was still the same wonderful show as it always is, splendid in all its elegance, gracious in its conviviality, but also loud with loads of fun. This year's gala to honour the best in cinematography was held at The Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto, with a party that carried into the wee hours of the morning.

In her opening speech, President Joan Hutton csc pointed out that in the constantly changing technological landscape of the film and television industry, cinematographers continue to adapt successfully and innovatively despite a notion that their pivotal relevance is diminishing in the new cinematic world.

“If tonight's nominee clips are any indication, the role of the cinematographer is stronger and more necessary than ever,” said Hutton. “It takes experience, precise skills and a creative edge to produce what we are about to see. Cinematographers are not going anywhere. We're behind the lens for the long haul.”

In planning this year's awards, a “back to the future” reasoning was used when deciding on a theme and presenters. When the awards began 55 years ago, they were backyard affairs with cinematographers presenting awards to their peers, and that premise was mirrored throughout this year's gala.

“We felt it would be interesting to keep it all in the family, so to speak,” said CSC Co-Vice President Carolyn Wong. “So, we've mined the CSC membership and cinematographers for award presenting duties.”

It was an astounding evening for CSC member Sarorn “Ron” Sim. He established a new record, picking up his third win three years in a row in the same category. Once again, Sim was the top choice for the Corporate/Education Cinematography Award for his crisp cinematography in the film *From Four Thousand Feet*, which dealt with the delivering of medical supplies to remote hospitals in Honduras by Central America Medical Outreach. Sim dedicated his award to two of his most influential mentors, the late acclaimed cinematographer Richard Leiterman csc and filmmaker Vladimir Kabelik.

“They have taught me more than just the art and craft of cinematography, but as importantly, the ethics behind the camera, the responsibility we have to our viewers and the responsibility we have to the subjects who stare down the barrel of our lens,” Sim said. The award was presented by DOP Mitchell T. Ness csc.

The huge double win of the night was by Allan Leader csc for a news report and a series he shot for the Discovery Channel. Leader's first win was The Stan Clinton Award for News Essay Cinematography for his work on *Rookie Driver*, an action-packed story about zooming across the Bonneville salt flats in a top fueler racing car. His second, the Lifestyle/Reality Cinematography Award for *Mighty Ships* “Le Boreal,” about the Antarctic maiden voyage of a super modern boutique cruise ship. Leader was not in attendance since he was shooting a documentary in Vietnam, but he provided written acceptance speeches, thanking the CSC for fostering the art of cinematography.

The Roy Tash Award for Spot News Cinematography was won by Andrew Lawson for his powerful images in the CTV News report “George Street Fire,” about fire crews battling a three-alarm blaze in downtown Toronto.

“What a great honour, and thank you very much,” said a nervous but happy Lawson. “[Reporter] Scott Lightfoot wrote a great piece on a very tight deadline and he deserves a lot of the credit for this. Without solid writing a lot of great stuff hits the floor, and I would also like to thank [VP CTV News] Paul Rogers for providing a great venue for us to practice our craft at CTV Toronto.”

It was also a very good night for Dean ej Friss, who was presented with The Camera Assistant Award of Merit by Kim Derko csc for his outstanding professionalism in the performance of his assistant camera duties and responsibilities. Friss garnered three separate nominations for this award, when only one is required. Friss is lauded for his devotion to his work and his exceptional skill as a focus puller.

The Student Cinematography Award, sponsored by Panavision Canada, went to Yann-Manuel Hernandez from the University



Yann-Manuel Hernandez, Student Cinematography, sponsored by Panavision



Todd M. Duym, Fritz Speiss Award for Commercial Cinematography



President's Award winner Paul Bronfman, CEO/Chairman of William F. White International Inc., with his wife Judy.



Sarorn Sim, Corporate/Educational Cinematography



Jon Joffin, Theatrical Feature Cinematography, sponsored by Deluxe



Denny Clairmont, President of Clairmont Camera, Bill Hilson Award



David Moxness csc, TV Drama Cinematography, sponsored by Sim Video



Andrew Lawson, The Roy Tash Award for Spot News Cinematography



David Greene, TV Series Cinematography, sponsored by Technicolor Toronto

of Montreal for his haunting images in *De quel sommeil reviennent-nous?* This is a first CSC win for a student from the University of Montreal. The award was presented by Jeff Flowers, VP Marketing, Western Canada, Panavision.

Cinematographer Stephen Whitehead travelled to 13 countries around the world to shoot his stirring images for the moving film *A People Uncounted*, which documents the Roma and how their present lives and rich culture has been shaped by the Holocaust, which almost annihilated them. Whitehead is this year's winner of the Robert Brooks Award for Documentary Cinematography, sponsored by Vistek and presented by Serge Desrosiers csc.

"It was a wonderful experience to make this film. I really fell in love with the Roma people," said Whitehead in accepting the award. "It's a wonderful thing to be a cinematographer, to try and tell the story of people who are uncounted and not really understood."

The winner of the Music Video/Performance Cinematography award, sponsored by Dazmo Digital, was Adam Marsden csc for his creative camera work on the music video "Fragile Bird" by City and Colour. Marsden couldn't attend the awards because of a prior work commitment in Los Angeles. The award was accepted by his agent Dora Sesler, and Karen Cohen. This is Marsden's second win in this category.

An ecstatic D. Gregor Hagey csc took home the Dramatic Short Cinematography Award for his lensing on the film *Artist Unknown*, which centres on the friends of famed Canadian artist Tom Thompson and their coming to grips with his death in 1917. The award was presented by David Herrington csc. Hagey has been nominated for several CSC awards in previous years, but this is his first big win. Hagey told the audience that if it wasn't for his dad he probably wouldn't be accepting this award.

"I shouldn't even be here tonight," said Hagey. "I wanted to be a comic book artist. That changed when I was 13 and my father brought home a video camera and portable betamax recorder. I started filming my own version of the *Muppet Show*, taught myself how to animate my Star Wars toys, enlisted my brothers and friends as actors and my mother as a costume designer. The camera replaced my sketchbook as my means of creative expression."

"This is awesome! I would like to thank my beautiful fiancée, she's watching (the awards gala) online now," said a disbelieving Tom M. Duym after accepting the Fritz Spiess Award for Commercial Cinematography from Herrington. Duym won for his stimulating imagery in the commercial "Obakki Fashion," highlighting the company's fall and winter clothing line. Duym hadn't thought it was possible for him to win and he thanked his agent for pushing him into submitting his work to the CSC Awards.

Arthur Cooper csc presented the TV Drama Cinematography Award, sponsored by Sim Video Productions, to David Moxness csc for his brilliant work on the modern historical drama *The Kennedys* "Moral Issues and Inner Turmoil."

"This is truly an honour to have this recognition, this award,"

said a delighted Moxness. I congratulate my fellow nominees. To be recognized amongst their expertise and fabulous work this year is humbling."

David Greene csc picked up the TV Series Cinematography Award, sponsored by Technicolor Toronto, for his remarkable shooting in the series *XIII* "Episode 101". Greene reminded the awards audience that DOPs are only as good as their crews.

"I'm really proud of our achievements on the screen," said Greene. "But I'm equally proud of the family we put together, the crew. For me and many others it is so important because it feeds our creative energies and allows us to be our best."

The Theatrical Feature Cinematography award, sponsored by Deluxe, was presented to Jon Joffin for his spectacular work on the offbeat teen drama, *Daydream Nation*. Joffin said he didn't think he had a chance of winning, so he didn't prepare a speech. But he did manage to acknowledge the beautiful work of his fellow nominees, and thank his incredible crew and a few others.

"I have to thank Clairmont for helping out with cameras. They were fantastic," said a dazed Joffin. "PS with lighting, amazing lighting. Deluxe labs, I love Deluxe labs, and my colourist, Andrea Dixon. We couldn't have had this film without her."

The consummate DOP Ousama Rawi csc, BSC was honoured this year with the Kodak New Century Award in recognition of his extraordinary talent and creativity as a cinematographer. Rawi is acclaimed for his lush, rich imagery and unique lighting technique as exemplified in period dramas such as *The Tudors*. Rawi could not attend the awards because he was on location in Prague shooting the historical drama *The Borgias*. But he did address the audience through a video recording, in which he not only thanked Kodak and the CSC for this extraordinary recognition but also paid homage to his craft.

"Cinematography has been a passion of mine from a very young age. I spent months and years trying to research everything about this craft", explained Rawi. "Sheer perseverance and refusing to take no for an answer eventually got me started professionally. I am eternally grateful that this beloved business accepted me and gave me a chance to pursue a career. It has been a fantastic ride."

Two of the more powerful moments in the evening came from the heartfelt extended standing ovations for Denny Clairmont, President of Clairmont Camera, and Paul Bronfman, Chairman and CEO of William F. White International and media holding company The Comweb Group.

The legendary Clairmont is this year's recipient of The Bill Hillson Award for outstanding contributions to the motion picture and television industry, which was presented by CSC Co-VP Ron Stannett csc. Once the clapping died down and he could say a few words, Clairmont, a Los Angeles native, spoke of his affection for Canada and how cinematographers and their ideas were the real catalyst behind Clairmont Camera's innovation and invention.

2012 CSC AWARD WINNERS

STUDENT CINEMATOGRAPHY

Yann-Manuel Hernandez
de quel sommeil reviendrons-nous?, University of Montreal

THE ROY TASH AWARD

FOR SPOT NEWS CINEMATOGRAPHY

Andrew Lawson *George St. Fire* CTV News

THE STAN CLINTON AWARD

FOR NEWS ESSAY CINEMATOGRAPHY

Allan Leader *csc Rookie Driver* "Daily Planet" Discovery Channel

CORPORATE/EDUCATIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHY

Sarorn Sim *From Four Thousand Feet*

LIFESTYLE/REALITY CINEMATOGRAPHY

Allan Leader *csc Le Boreal* "Mighty Ships"

SPECIAL HONOUREES AT 2012 CSC AWARDS

BILL HILSON AWARD:

Denny Clairmont, President of Clairmont Camera.
"For outstanding service contributing to the development of the motion picture industry in Canada."

PRESIDENT'S AWARD:

Paul Bronfman, CEO/Chairman of William F.White International Inc.
"For outstanding service to the Canadian Society of Cinematographers."

KODAK NEW CENTURY AWARD:

Ousama Rawi *csc, bsc*
"For outstanding contribution to the art of cinematography."

CAMERA ASSISTANT AWARD OF MERIT

Dean ej Friss
"For excellence and outstanding professionalism in the performance of the AC duties and responsibilities."

ROBERT BROOKS AWARD FOR DOCUMENTARY CINEMATOGRAPHY

Sponsored by Vistek
Stephen Whitehead *A People Uncounted*

MUSIC VIDEO / PERFORMANCE

Adam Marsden *csc*
City and Colour *Fragile Bird*

DRAMATIC SHORT CINEMATOGRAPHY

D. Gregor Hagey *csc Artist Unknown*

FRITZ SPIESS AWARD FOR COMMERCIAL CINEMATOGRAPHY

Todd M. Duym Obakki *Fashion Fall / Winter*

TV DRAMA CINEMATOGRAPHY

Sponsored by: Sim Video Productions Ltd.
David Moxness *csc The Kennedys* "Moral Issues and Inner Turmoil"

TV SERIES CINEMATOGRAPHY

Sponsored by: Technicolor Toronto
David Greene *csc XIII* "Ep.101"

THEATRICAL FEATURE CINEMATOGRAPHY

Sponsored by: Deluxe
Jon Joffin *Daydream Nation*

"They contributed more than just a thought," said Clairmont. "They had some pretty good ideas and some sketches, so yes they sat down with me and my technicians and [we] made it work. A lot of credit has to go to DOPs."

It was the same for Bronfman, who also had to wait for the clapping and shouts of approval to subside before he was presented by Hutton with the President's Award for outstanding service to the CSC. Aside from being the head of one of the largest lighting and grip equipment rental houses in the world, Bronfman is well known as an old-school rock and roller. Aptly, Bronfman began his acceptance speech in a novel way by reading the lyrics to AC/DC's hit song *Highway to Hell* as the band's song blared from a digital recorder.

"Ain't nothing I would rather do," quoted Bronfman. "Going down, party time. My friends are gonna be there too. I'm on the highway to hell!" The awards audience loved it, breaking into spontaneous applause and screams of approval. Rock on, Mr. Bronfman!

Bronfman told the audience that he considers himself very fortunate to work in our fantastic industry and that it's the people who make it so wonderful and thriving.

"We are truly interdependent on each other for success," said Bronfman. "Jointly we make our country a worldwide industry leader."

Wise words befitting a fantastic industry evening. 🍷



Dean ej Friss, Camera Assistant Award of Merit



Ron Silverstein, President of Vistek, and Stephen Whitehead, Robert Brooks Award for Documentary cinematography, sponsored by Vistek

Award Photo Credits: John Narvali