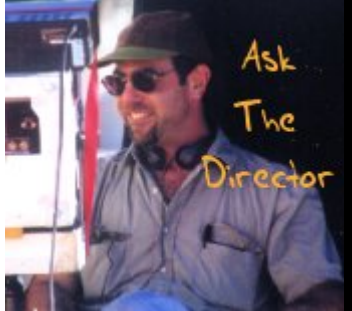


Josh Becker DGA

Directing From The Edge



Q & A Archive
Page 11

Name: Lacey
E-mail: laceyr@angelfire.com

Josh.

Thanks for the info. So you and Madonna are Astro-twins? LOL. However if I'm not mistaken she was born in Bay City which might make a slight difference and of course upbringing ahs a lot to do with it too, not to mention gender *g*. L8tr

Lacey
Lucy's Horoscope Renee's Horoscope
<http://www.angelfire.com/mo/laceyastro/index.html>

Dear Lacey:

I always heard that Madonna was born in Detroit, but you seem to know, so I believe you. I didn't think we were really born in the same hospital anyway, she being Catholic and me being Jewish.

Josh

Name: Shirley
E-mail: shirley@beckerfilms.com

Dear Josh:

Someone asked me this question about you and your latest Xena episode. I suggested they ask you themselves, but they seem to have declined. The question is, "Does he really think KS represents a good effort on his part?"

Shirley

Dear Shirley (the ultimate webmaster):

I can't say whether it was a good or bad effort, all I can say is that it was a total effort--"KS" was the most difficult episode I've directed yet. I spent two weeks prepping for the wrong script, got the very first draft of this story in on Saturday night and we began shooting Monday morning. This was a five-day episode, most eps being 7 or 8 days, meaning that you generally shoot 6-7 pages a day, I was shooting 8 1/2 pages a day. I spent almost the entire five-day shoot with my stomach up in my mouth. I wouldn't answer any questions about anything except the scene we were shooting. It was tough, and I think it turned out pretty well.

Josh

Name: Shary Singer
E-mail: tutor@primenet.com

Dear Josh:

Would you mind if I used one of the Wedding pictures for the Flawless site? It is a site dedicated to Lucy, (the "Flawless one") L Francis Lawless. The site is located at www.flawless.org

Dear Shary:

They're not my photos so I can't give permission, but if you just took them, who would know?

Josh

Name: Xenamour
E-mail: Xenamour@cs.com

Dear Mr. Becker,

The last bit of mail I sent you, I did not expect you to post, it was a bit of fan mail about Kindred Spirits, that I wrote after reading reviews and synopses of the ep. from people whose veiws I respected. Your comment to me at that time way something along the lines of, "maybe you should wait until you see the episode. Well sir... I have now *seen* the episode in Question, and my comments and compliments *stand*. Thank you. I would really appreciate it if you read my "review" of the ep. at this addy:
<http://www.studiosusa.com/tv/mb/NonCGI/Forum2/HTML/017828.html>

I do have one question about it however... When I first visited your site and asked you some Xena related directing questions, you told me that the original script, as written, was very *dark*, and that you and LL and ROC basically decided to lighten it up and ad libed a lot of stuff. I LOVED the episode.

But I was wondering... when you said it was a *dark* episode as written, was subtext written into that darker version as well?

And if you had to compare, assuming you actually saw or read any of the other scripts for prior seasons that you did not direct, what episode of past seasons would it have equaled in its tone, as written, not as directed?

Inquiring Minds would like to know,
Thanks, One of Many Fallen Angels, Xenamour

Dear Xenamour:

I'm pleased you liked the episode. I can't compare the old script of "KS" to any other eps, it certainly wasn't like any that I had done. And no, there wasn't any of that subtext. It was all very grim: the Amazons are killing horses for their ceremonies and intend to kill Argo and Amber, while meanwhile, Xena and Gaby argue all the time. The key person regarding the change in tone and story was the man himself, Rob Tapert, who personally gutted the script and wrote an entirely new outline a week before we shot.

Josh

Name: Colin
E-mail: resurrection440@aol

Josh,

First of all your my favorite director, i have two questions to ask you, one is a friend of mine ordered a couple of movies directly from your sight and you personally autographed them and i was wondering if you still did that, also, i know that you wont be doing anymore this year but do you think that you will be directing any epeodes of Xena or Jack next season, thanks for you time. and keep making your bad ass movies.

Dear Colin:

Thanks for calling me your favorite director. What that really means, however, is you need to see more movies. I sold the first couple of hundred "RT" tapes here on my site and signed them, but that's over know. As to my directing more Jacks or Xenas next season, I certainly hope so. If nothing else, they'd better have me back on Xena simply because I'm the only director to make it through all six seasons.

Josh

Name: Lucas
E-mail: snoogans@softhome.net

Josh,

Is that epic-sounding music on the main page of the site from TSNKE? And if so, is there a chance in hell of that movie's score ever being released to the public?

Cheers,
Lucas

Dear Lucas:

Yes, that it the main theme to TSNKE. Pretty damn good music, eh? Joe LoDuca is a truly inspired composer. Sadly, though, it is not available and no one is making any offers to release it or any of the other brilliant Joe LoDuca scores on my films.

Josh

Name: Lacey
E-mail: laceyr@angelfire.com

Howdy Josh....

I am a great admirer of your work and I see you have your date of birth on your website. I am an astrology buff and the only way to do a complete chart would be to find out the time of day you were born. Do you know when it is? Right now, I have charts of Lucy, Renee, Sam Raimi, Bruce Campbell and Ted Raimi. The only ones missing are yours and Rob Tapert's. Do you know when he was born and at what time he was born?

Your assistance would be much appreciated. Thanks,
Lacey

Dear Lacey:

I'm very bad about remembering birthdays and I don't remember Rob's. I was born at 1:00 A.M. on August 17th, 1958, mere minutes after Madonna, who may well have been in the same hospital there in Detroit.

Josh

Name: Tony
E-mail:

Dear Josh:

A quick question about "Kindred Spirits." First of, it turned out really well and was glad to see Xena and Gab and their feelings about each other being the forefront of the story.

I was wondering about the line when Gab is napping and is woken up and says 'Not tonight.' I know you and Renee are very aware of the subtextual aspect of the show and that line was clearly put in with a bit of subtextual innuendo. I know there is a lot of ad-libbing and adding to things not in the original script when filming episodes, so I was curious if that line was actually scripted or was it ad-libbed by yourself or Renee.

Thanks.
Tony

Dear Tony:

That was Renee's line, which I found very funny. Lucy added the line, pointing at Renee's antlers, "You make that yourself?" which I also think is very funny.

Josh

Name: Paul
E-mail: samo_korine@yahoo.com

Dear Josh,

Are you familiar with Italian filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini? I doubt you would be a fan of his neo-realism films, but have you seen any? Later on and good luck with your future.

Dear Paul:

I've seen a few of Pasolini's films and they're so sloppily made with poor actors that I wasn't interested. DeSica and Rossellini are much more interesting filmmakers.

Josh

Name: Virginia Kelly

E-mail: vkellyian@compuserve.com

Dear Josh:

I just saw Kindred Spirits last evening and enjoyed it. I was curious about the scene where Xena and Gabrielle have an argument about settling down and Xena decides to take Eve and leave for a few weeks. The scene was beautifully understated and subtle with much more said by the actresses' eyes and facial expressions than was in the script. It was, by far, my personal favorite scene in the episode. Was that per your direction or did it just happen that way? How do you approach an emotional scene like that as a director? Thanks for your time. By the way, I have enjoyed the Xena eps you've directed in the past. My son has enjoyed the eps you directed on Jack of All Trades.

Dear Virginia:

That's my favorite scene in the show, too. Lucy and Renee were playing the scene quite well without my help, but they were playing it quickly. I asked them to do two things, 1. Slow it down, and 2. Instead of making the little lines ("Then I'll go" "You think it's a good idea") statements, make them questions. It made aged old director's heart swell with joy when both Lucy and Renee's faces lit up when they considered the idea of questions instead of statements, and decided to play it that way.

Josh

Name: MELISSA C.

E-mail: ILBAX1429@aol.com

Dear Josh:

HI!! I'M JUST WRITING BECAUSE I WANT TO KNOW IF YOU KNOW LUCY LAWLESS OR ROBERT TAPERT PERSONALLY. THIS IS BECAUSE I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF YOU CAN ASK THEM SOME QUESTIONS THAT I NEED FOR SCHOOL DESPERATELY. THIS IS BECAUSE IT IS DUE MARCH 27 2000 AND I CAN'T GET AN INTERVIEW WITH ANY OTHER CELEBRITY. MY PROJECT IS THAT YOU HAVE TO GET AN INTERVIEW WITH A PERSON THAT IS IN THE FIELD OF THE PROFESSION YOU WANT TO OCCUPY WHEN YOU ARE OLDER. SINCE I WANT TO BE AN ACTRESS AND AN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF YOU CAN ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS FOR ME. IF YOU CAN'T GET TO ASK THEM THESE QUESTIONS CAN YOU PLEASE ANSWER THEM YOURSELF STATING WHAT YOU THINK EITHER OF THEM WOULD SAY??

THE QUESTIONS ARE: WHO OR WHAT INFLUENCED YOU TO BE AN ACTRESS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER? IF YOU COULD HAVE ANY OTHER PROFESSION WHAT WOULD IT BE? DOES BEING AN ACTRESS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER EFFECT YOUR MARRIAGE AND KIDS?? IF SO HOW?? WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE ON HOW TO BE A GOOD ACTRESS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER? WHAT SCHOOLS DID YOU GO TO AND WHERE? DO YOU LIKE YOUR JOB, AND WHY? IS IT HARD BEING AN ACTRESS/EXECUTIVE PRODUCER WHY?

Dear Melissa:

Since I am neither an actress nor an executive producer, you are barking up the wrong tree here. Also, anyone that writes entirely in caps seems insane to me, like they are shouting at the top their lungs.

Josh

Name: Lynda
E-mail: lyndah@bluemail.cc

Josh,

so now Xena has stooped to the level of Something About Mary? I guess that says it all. Xena used to be cutting edge, something different on TV, something original. But with KS it is appealing to the lower common denominator or should I say the lowest forms of life. Thanks for helping to contribute to the demise of Xena, I'm sure you're real proud of yourself. Xena once was a show that had the potential to challenge Star Trek in going down as a legend in pop culture folklore. Instead it will be said in the same breath as Wonder Woman, which is far outstripped in its popularity by her comic books rather than the TV show. Xena could hardly be so lucky 20 years down the road.

Good luck with your movie career. I'm sure there's another Something About Mary just waiting for you to direct.

Hasta la vista, baby!
Lynda

Dear Lynda:

Now that you mention it, yeah, I am pretty proud of myself.

Josh

Name: August
E-mail: joxerfan@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

Wow! The guy who ruined Lucy's career. Pretty impressive!

So someone at the Studios USA message board wondered who on earth could have come up with the hilarious idea of a tap dancing peg-legged pirate, and amazingly I knew the answer!

So then they asked the obvious follow-up - who played the pirate? An extra? A dancer? Any idea?

Thanks,
August

Dear August:

I wasn't there for the shoot, it was directed by Charlie Haskell. When Joe LoDuca, the composer, came up with his wonderfully silly opening song (which he sang for me over the phone down in NZ), I came up with the idea of actually shooting a waterfront bar full of people singing the song--it was initially just going to be over images from the show--and came up with a list of about 20 gags, which I gave to Rob Tapert, and that's the only one that made it in.

Josh

Name: noa friedmann
E-mail: noa-smg@barak-online.net

Dear Josh:

hi, i have to say that you are very good. i have some questions for you and i hope that you will help me.

- 1.how is new zealand? is it really lovely place?
- 2.how do you get along with renee and lucy?are they nice?
- 3.do you have some tips to me how to be a good director because this is my dream.my second dream is to live at NZ and meet renee and lucy please answer me

i am waiting for your answers
noa

Dear Noa:

Yes, New Zealand is lovely. It's very temperate and never gets too cold or too hot (except a few days in the middle of the summer), and since it's a tiny strip of land sitting in the ocean, weather blows through quickly and it rains a lot, but generally doesn't last very long. It does keep everything wonderfully green. Regarding Lucy and Renee, we get along swimmingly, I think they're both terrific and I think they both like me. And to be a good director I think you need to see as many movies as possible and develop as much taste as you possibly can.

Josh

Name: Lynda
E-mail: lyndah@bluemail.cc

Josh!

Re Kindred Spirits. What was that??? Is that your idea of funny? You should have stuck to the original script which you said was meant to be more serious. Then maybe something could have worked. Then again I doubt it. Didn't you say the wrestling scene was ad-libbed? I'm thinking there was a *reason* it wasn't in the script. It was just plain idiotic, not funny. Thanks for ruining Lucy's career. She was so embarrassing. What is with you people at RenPics anyway? You had a good thing but continue to ruin it week after week. That 15 minutes of fame clock seems to be closing in on Xero real fast.

Lynda

Dear Lynda:

You can't please all the people all the time. Oddly, many Xena fans really like this episode, but, as usual with any comedy, it won't appeal to everyone, particularly broad comedy. For instance, it seems like the whole country pissed their pants over "There's Something About Mary" which I found entirely unfunny. Comedy is certainly in the eye of the beholder.

Josh

Name: August
E-mail: joxerfan@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

I know that you've often said jokingly that you've shamed friends or relatives into investing in your films, and that no one should ever expect to make a cent on an independent film.

However - how *would* one go about attracting investors? Have you ever had a complete "outsider" invest in one of yours, and were any of the investors you've referred to for "Evil Dead" business people looking to gamble some money? Technically, if someone invested several hundred thousand dollars, and the film ended up making a million dollars in profit, that might be small potatoes for Hollywood, but a major return on investment.

Thanks,
August

Dear August:

Most of the people that invested in "TSNKE" and "Lunatics" were outsiders. The way you go about getting investors is, first you put together a limited partnership, then you approach every single person that seems like they might have enough money to invest (and lose). The basic approach is, even if you don't get money out of someone, at least get the name of someone else with a lot of money. It's a long, difficult road, but undoubtedly easier than getting a deal in Hollywood.

Josh

Name: another xena fan
E-mail: ldthirty@smithville.net

Dear Josh:

It seems like sometimes you have angry Xena fans contacting you about stuff. Well.....I just wanted to say that I've enjoyed almost all the eps you've had something to do with. The ones I didn't like weren't your fault, just a personal preference. From what I've heard about "Kindred Spirits" it's gonna be a good one. Just wanted to say thanks for your part in one of my favorite shows.

Dear Another Xena Fan:

Thanks. I hope you like the episode.

Josh

Name: Debbie Edney
E-mail: edneyd@gateway.net

Dear Josh:

Thanks for sharing pictures from your "scrapbook" with us. Auckland must be beautiful. It was very special to see pictures from the wedding also. Very entertaining site. (Your passport picture was a nice touch.) Again, thanks.

Dear Debbie:

We here at Beckerfilms.com spend 24 hours a day, seven days a week, working to entertain you. If we succeeded, then we are pleased.

Josh

Name: Charles B. Owen
E-mail: cbowen@cse.msu.edu

Dear Josh:

I appreciated your insightful review of "Saving Private Ryan". I was beginning to think I was the only person who considered it such a disaster of a movie. I think the single scene that sums up the entire movie is when one of the platoon is reprimanded for saluting Hank's character because he would give away that the guy with the bars is an officer. Not only did they make the stupid mistake of placing insignia on the helmet, but they darn well knew it was stupid and didn't care. I find that unforgivable.

Dear Charles:

Me, too.

Josh

Name: SlickWilly
E-mail: slickwilly@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

American Beauty was horrible. The acting was it's only saving grace. The plot was convoluted and I didn't really care what happened to almost everyone in the film. The 6th Sense was very, very good. Though the minute Bruce Willis didn't respond to the allegations of abuse toward the boys mom, I immediately knew Willis was... Well, I don't want to ruin it for others. But his lack of interaction with the mother and such and then that scene with the other doctors simply cinched it for me as to how the film was going to end.

- Slick Willy

Dear SlickWilly:

Well, you're sharper than me because I didn't suspect anything. I have no doubt when I watch it again, which I will, I'll find things that perhaps give away the show, but it worked like a charm the first time.

Josh

Name: Slick Willy
E-mail: slickwilly@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

If you are against selling out to Hollywood as a director, which I deeply respect and admire, would you at least consider sleeping with someone of power in order to get ahead? Female of course! Now, I am not saying that being gay is bad. I merely am assuming you are actively a competent, confident heterosexual.

Later,
- SlickWilly

Dear SlickWilly (this isn't Bill Clinton, is it?):

As though sleeping my way up the ladder here were an option. I probably had a much better chance with that strategy when I first got to Hollywood 24 years ago, when I was young and in good shape. Now I'm 41 and out of shape and I don't think I could get the studio custodial help--male or female--to sleep with me, let alone anyone that could advance my career.

Josh

Name: Ashley Mayo
E-mail: mmayo@dcpud.org

Dear Josh:

I was wondering what Lucy was eating when the picture on your site was taken. Also, if I wanted to go to New Zealand sometime, where could I go to maybe meet Lucy or Renee

Dear Ashley:

I think it's a popsicle or an ice cream bar. And you've got just as good a chance of seeing Lucy or Renee if you go down to NZ as you do seeing Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep if you come out to Hollywood.

Josh

Name: Joe Murphy
E-mail: joemurphy.1@email.com

Dear Josh:

Not that you need any support, but I just wanted to let you know that you're not the only one who disliked "American Beauty." I went with a friend, and she and I both just couldn't understand what was supposed to be so fantastic about this movie.

I couldn't put my finger on the problem. It just felt like by the end of the movie, we just hadn't acutally been told anything. I'm glad you pointed out the lack of proper structure. I can now see how this problem makes movies seem more like prattling, and less like storytelling.

Joe Murphy

Dear Joe:

I knew it wasn't just me. I've also finally seen "The Sixth Sense" and can heartily recommend it and highly prefer it to "AB," as far as Best Picture nominees go. "The Sixth Sense" has a terrific screenplay that knows exactly where it's trying to take its characters and why. I've never heard of this guy before, M. Night Shyamalan (did I get that right?), but he did a hell of a good job both writing and directing. And Bruce Willis did a very good job, as did the kid. The hell with "American Beauty," I'm tired of even thinking about it because it's not worth it.

Josh

Name: Ken

E-mail: kcbaker@ucsd.edu

Josh:

You no doubt have a very firm grasp on the development of story from scene to scene, as well as a keen grasp of the thematic formula for the prgression of most movies. However, is it possible for a film to defy the conventions set forth before it and still be good? Does a good film HAVE to follow the accepted format of screenplays? Does it HAVE to progress in a Aristotelian manner? I don't believe so. If a film touches someone, and it made sense from start to stop, and was still thought to be good, who's to say that just because it defied some convention that it was bad?

Dear Ken:

I agree with you, it is most certainly possible to move beyond the forms, but not until you've mastered the forms. Until you can tell a competent three-act story you can't move beyond it. You cannot deconstruct a form until you've mastered it.

Josh

Name:

E-mail:

Dear Josh:

You obviously don't know what you are talking about. American Beauty follows the three act structure to a

tee. In fact, the narration itself lets the audience know when one act ends and the other begins. For example, the film opens with Kevin Spacey proclaiming that he is dead, fine. But it also introduces us to his life and family. Act one is about the downward spiral of his life at the time. Then, act two opens with the narration stating that sometimes you can still surprise yourself. Here, Kevin has turned his life upside down. He is working out now, Annette Benning is screwing the sales guy and his daughter is seeing the neighbor. This sets up all the conflict for the third act. The third act starts with the narration "every day is the first day for the rest of your life..." Here, the shit hits the fan and all the set up conflicts pay off. From the neighbor's dad's hatred for gays to the video of Kevin Spacey working out. Nothing is left unresolved, and every character finds closure. I recommend you watching the film again and not count scenes, but instead take the movie in as a whole, because it will be a very long time before you see another movie with as tight a package as American Beauty.

Dear Nobody:

Don't you just love people that will write a several hundred word, somewhat snotty retort, and not even have the guts to give their name. But anyway, to you the Unnamed Author of this missive: that's not how the three acts work. Just because your narrator says, "Today is the first day of the rest of your life" does not make it an act end or beginning. The ends of acts one and two ought to be at moments of no going back for the lead character. For instance, had he actually had sex with his daughter's friend, that's something you can't go back on. Now what do you do? So, sorry, but I don't buy your slightly snotty retort.

Josh

Name: SlickWilly
E-mail: slickwilly@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

So, what's your next project? I know you said you are still working on finishing "If I Had A Hammer", but do you have a another film project you intend to do next and when do you think you'll get to it? Thanks.

Dear SlickWilly:

I'm sitting and waiting on a financing deal right now. If I got the dough I would make my script "Devil Dogs: The Battle of Belleau Wood," which I've been writing and rewriting for four years.

Josh

Name: katherine
E-mail: kdadamenko@yahoo.com

Dear Josh:

Can you pass a message to Jason Kyle Web from Kath and Scooter - we've been in search of Jason for a long time - we are college roomates and he took off a few years ago -

Can't wait to see the movie!

Thanks for passing this message on!

Kath

Dear Kath:

You're the second person to locate Jason through this site. I'll be happy to pass the message along. BTW, he's *really* good in the movie.

Josh

Name: BrownBetty

E-mail:

Josh,

You seem to be a real negative person, are you? Do you ever find anything worth while about any new films? Why are you so jaded? Is it just the way you are, or is it some kinda Hollywood act you put on to seem important? Seriously, not to hurt your feelings, but I'd really like to know.

Dear Brownbetty:

I just saw "The Sixth Sense" and liked it. Perhaps my standards are just higher than yours.

Josh

Name: Xenamour

E-mail: Xenamour@cs.com

Dear Mr. Becker,

I just wanted to write to thank you, in advance for bringing the breath of life back to our Beloved Xena and Gabrielle in Kindred Spirits. I have seen the reviews and spoilers, and am waiting with baited breath to see the episode this coming weekend. The Xenaverse is already abuzz with the good news that the episode reflects again the characters we have come to know and love and have so missed in much of this season. The news that for the first time in many weeks, the apparitions the characters had become and the ghost that was made of thier bond, have again been made flesh. You and Lucy and ROC, changed what you were given into a gift for us, and whether you did it knowingly or not, I thank you. You can be sure fans will be writing in to tell Ren Pics they want you to direct more episodes this next season because of it.

Real life heros I find in friends, family, and the patients I treat. Creative altruism is more easily fostered by the fictional hero's because they let us fantisize about ideals, a purer and less fettered version of our realities, unhampered by the constraints of our own foibles and the variables we cannot hope to control in the world around us. I was once able to lose myself for an hour a week in such fantasy, and to share time with two Beloved and Incredible Beings without specific thought or awareness of storylines or production issues. I still want to do that, desperately. Thank you for allowing me that chance with Kindred Spirits once again.

Regards and Respect,
Xenamour

Dear Xenamour:

Thanks, but maybe you ought to see the episode first, maybe you won't like it.

Josh

Name: J Bailey
E-mail: SeriusGamr@aol.com

Dear Josh:

Hello, For Jack of all trades, is it solely produced by USA studios or are there smaller independent studios involved with USA just mainly handling distribution? Just curious...I've looked on the official site and can't find any other info.

thank you
Joel Bailey

Dear Joel:

Here's how I believe it works: "Jack" is produced by Renaissance Pictures, who make it for Universal TV, which is owned by USA, however I could be wrong.

Josh

Name: Matt
E-mail: Fuzziehair@hotmail.com

Josh,

Im from England and i havent really heard of you before, i dont mean to offend you. My question is, what do you think of the british film industry, and what would you suggest that i should do to get involved in film directing, as i have no experience at all.

Dear Matt:

Several of my favorite filmmakers were British, particularly Alfred Hitchcock and David Lean. However, there isn't much of film industry in England anymore. I say, make your own independent productions. Try following the DOGMA theories from Scandinavia, forgoing special effects and production values and concentrate on the story.

Josh

Name: Jim
E-mail: Starion106@aol.com

Hey Josh,

Got a technical question here. I've written my shot outline for a short film (10-15 minutes) that I hope to shoot this weekend. Problem is, I'm not sure how/if I'm going to get all the shots I'd like. I'm shooting on SVHS with basic school rental equipment; tripod, boom mic, possibly a spot and broad lighting setup if necessary, and a metal library cart I'm borrowing for a dolly shot. Now most of the stuff will be done with the tripod and that will work fine. But there's the previously mentioned dolly shot, as well as a 'crane'-type low to high shot that I'm using as the end shot of the first act. Any idea how I can get this, without a big crane setup? I was thinking of getting a big piece of wood and making a see-saw setup, but I dunno.. still gonna have the hand-held issues. Any suggestions?

Dear Jim:

Yeah, do it hand-held, but as steady as you can. You can start up on some boxes with the camera over your head and start all the way up at the ceiling, and as you come step down the boxes slowly lower the camera, and you can take it all the way down to the floor if you want--use your body as the crane. Try to be somewhat wide angle as well to remove the bumps. Happy shooting.

Josh

Name: robin goodman

E-mail:

Dear Josh,

How are you? The new format is o.k./but why orange/black.... anyway, I was wondering if there is anything funny that happened to you while directing xena. Anything that just stands out. And do you lose your temper on the set, with the actors other than Renee and Lucy. Because there so professional.....thanks

robin

Dear Robin:

I've probably spent all together about eighteen months down in New Zealand working on Herc, Xena and Jack in the past six years. Many funny things have ocured, but I can't remember any of them as of this moment. And I don't lose my temper on the set, I think it's bad form. I would NEVER lose my temper at Lucy or Renee, it's their show.

Josh

Name: Scott Wilson

E-mail: swilson@newsdigital.com

Dear Josh:

I was wondering if you could send some sort of bio on Jason Kyle Webb, please.

Dear Scott:

Jason is a very talented actor with a great voice, that hasn't got many credits. I'd use him again in a second. What's this about?

Josh

Name: Bill
E-mail: none

Dear Josh:

Unless I missed something, I think you may have criticized the wrong actress there bud. Reese Witherspoon was in Election, Cruel Intentions, Twilight, Freeway....Thora Birch on the other hand played Jane (the daughter) and Mena Suvari played the girl Spacey fantasized about. I'd have to say Birch looked like that because of the direction she was given (assuming that's who you're talking about), especially when you check out any other movie she was in. I'm still waiting on a comment about the shitty white paint on Peter Gallagher's hair.

Dear Bill:

Thanks for the correction. Thora Birch, eh? Well, she looks like she smelled shit whether that's what the director told her or not. As to the white shoe polish in Mr. Gallagher's hair, at least he's not Australian pretending to be American.

Josh

Name: ALAN MOUNT
E-mail: picquickstudio@aol.com

Dear Josh: Did you ever hear talk of getting the likes of Steve Reeves, Gordon Scott or any of the other old sword and sandal stars to guest or cameo in "HERCULES"? Do you think it would have been a good idea?

Dear Alan:

I suggested such a thing right at the very beginning, then wrote a story outline that was never used. It was called "Hercules Vs. Atlas" and was supposed to have an older muscle man as Atlas. Cie la vie.

Josh

Name: JT
E-mail: jcarroll@austin.rr.com

Josh,

Wow, I fail to check in for three days, and I come back to a new page format and a new way of dealing with the trolls. *grin*

Anyway, (on to the question) - this relates back to the 30 minute screenplay I asked you about before. It

looks like Acts I and II are timed about right -- but act III is a few minutes too short. So my question is, to extend or not to extend? I'm not one for adding unnecessary fluff, but i also don't want to leave my audience feeling cut off and expecting more.

As always, any advise is very much appreciated. Thanks!

JT

Dear JT:

Go with what feels right. Page lengths are only guidelines. I've come out with some oddball length acts, and maybe I was even wrong, but it felt right at the time. Just tell a good story.

Josh

Name: S
E-mail: spsproductions@yahoo.com

Dear Josh:

Interesting Josh, as I've just had my agent query Army at Beacon regarding one of my screenplays! Any suggestions, sounds like you've been through the trenches & back! Thanks.

S

Dear S:

Hey, I never met anyone at Beacon. If you're on a first-name basis with Mr. Bernstein, then you ought to be all right. I still think the script that I sold them was one of my best and they've done nothing with it in six years, so be careful of that. So far, I haven't liked any pictures Beacon has made, so there's that, too. Good luck.

Josh

Name: August
E-mail: joxerfan@hotmail.com

Dear Josh -

I like the "new look" to the site, as well as the FAQ section. I also invariably enjoy (in a similarly juvenile way) your responses to hecklers!

This is more of an observation than a question on the never-ending "American Beauty" debate. I haven't seen the movie yet, have heard from various people that it's terrific, but I'm now fascinated by the numerous responses here from people who have yet to explain why they feel it's so great. (Beyond "It's awesome," "It's won awards," "It's making money," etc.) I wonder if it isn't the work of talented performers doing interesting acting that they are confusing with a film's being "great."

I'm reminded of the writer Robert Benchley, who for a time was the drama critic for ...The New Yorker, I think,

or perhaps one of the NY papers, in the '20's. He panned a play called "Abie's Irish Rose" which went on to run for something like seven years. He never backed down from his original opinion, and in fact each week would write a sarcastic little capsule description of it, implying that the audiences must be crazy. And of course Benchley is remembered as a great writer, while who has sat down to re-read "Abie's Irish Rose" recently?

Keep up the good work
- August

Dear August:

I think that's true, people are getting caught up with the acting. Oddly, I don't think it's all THAT well-acted, either. Not that Spacey and Benning aren't up to anything the writer could throw at them, but their characters don't really go anyplace so there's no place for the actors to go. Reese Witherspoon, on the other hand, simply annoys me (she looks like she just smelled shit all the time).

Josh

Name: brian
E-mail: b tech bomber

Hey Josh,

I was wondering what makes you the king of movies? If you really knew that much you wouldn't be directing episodes of Xena.

Dear Brian:

You got a problem with Xena, fuckface? I've got a suggestion for you: eat a big bowl of shit, then drop dead!! [I'm enjoying this new approach to dealing with idiots, it amuses me in a very juvenile way].

Josh

Name: tommy
E-mail: namn@hawaii.edu

Dear Josh:

I'm doing this research project for one of my classes here at the university of hawaii, and i just happened to come across your site randomly, and i see that you have much experience in the film industry and you are one of those people who has his own mind--you don't let others think for you, i.e. (i read all that stuff about American Beauty in that question-answer part of your site; i will read your criticism after i get through all those other stuff on your substantial site.

My project is gong to be about the film industry and things relating to it. I was wondering could I include you in it as one of the authorities. I'll keep it brief. Most of the ?s I have are about you--your "character." Like a profile. My entire class, to whom you are unfamiliar, including my professor, will get to know you. And if I publish it, more people will know about you. (My teacher wants me to write this non-fictional/biographical "report" like a short story (i.e, with a "protagonist" or main character) . . . and certainly you are an interesting

character to write about. I hope you are okay with being the center of my story. Other people will be minor.

Interestingly you love STRUCTURE--so do I and my other professor who is teaching screenplay writing, which I am currently taking here at UH--and the piece I'm writing (even though this is not a screenplay or a fictional piece) will be written with a structure that all fiction has . . . {But if you do not want me to write about your (life) story, then that's alright.}

The questions I ask are all "good" and different and will reveal your intelligence and character complexity and they are specific to your life.

(this project is sort of being done in bits and pieces, so no rush--especially w/ your hectic type of job)

tommy namn@hawaii.edu

Dear Tommy:

OK, go ahead and ask away. Let's do it here on the Q&A for everyone to read.

Josh

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Questions or Comments

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