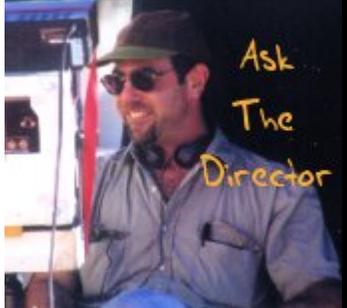


Josh Becker DGA

Directing From The Edge



Q & A Archive
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Name: JawBone
E-mail: jawbone326@yahoo.com

Hey Josh-

You gonna be at E3 next month at the LA convention center? I read that bruce is gonna be there, so I was wondering if you were gonna be too. I'm going and I was just curious. Thanks

JawBone

Dear JawBone:

I don't go to conventions.

Josh

Name: CJ
E-mail: cj@vcnet.com

Dear Josh:

Wondering which Kurosawa film you like the best and why? Also will you be working with Mr.Sam Raimi on The Spiderman film? Thanks for your time.

Dear CJ:

Well, let's see . . . I like "Seven Samurai," "Sanjuro," "Ikiru," "High and Low," "Yojimbo," and "Dersu Uzala." I'm not crazy about anything he did after "Dersu Uzala." Regarding, "Spiderman," one director will be sufficient.

Josh

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

Josh

I met Bob Trebor at a British TV convention in late 98 and thought him a great guy although he was a little too enamoured of his showreel which he brought with him. He gave no indication then that his days in the shows were numbered although at that time I don't think the XENA episode that Renee directed had been made. He is a comedy actor of some flair with a touch of the Bob Hope coward who would be a hero about him. There must be a good reason why he was not included in the latter episodes of HERCULES, Kevin's throwaway line about Salmoneus in "LOVE, AMAZON STYLE" was a real snub to both the character and actor. Will Trebor appear in JACK for example?

Dear Alan:

No, I don't think he'll be back, but who knows? I personally never thought he was funny. As I've mentioned before, however, he's terrific at movie trivia. He stumped me with this one--which director of a Kathrine Hepburn film edited a Stanley Kubrick movie? I actually did know this somewhere deep down, but I couldn't come close to remembering it.

Josh

Name: CJ
E-mail: cj@vcnet.com

Dear Josh:

Mike Figgis' new movie Time Code 2000 "an experimental motion picture shot live with four digital cameras running simultaneously" and apparently the movie was shot in one continuous take for 93 minutes without a single edit and I guess once it hits the big screen it will show in the form of four quadrants on one screen what do you think?

Dear CJ:

I have no problem with running in real time (obviously), but having four quadrants appearing at the same time is a royally bad idea--split screen never was a very good idea, and since human beings are much more comfortable focusing on one thing at a time, having to try to concentrate on four images simultaneously won't help anything. We won't even go into the fact that Mike Figgis is rather a dull director to begin with.

Josh

Name: Gord
E-mail: gord@gordzajac.com

Josh,

Just wondering if you had any thoughts on the auteur theory. (For those who don't know what I'm talking about it, it's the theory that proclaims the director as the "true" artist of a film.) Any thoughts?

Gord

Dear Gord:

That's a good question. Flatly, no, I don't believe in it and that's because I know that the script is the most important element. If it's written and directed by the same person, then that's the auteur. If it's written and directed by different people then they're both the auteurs. There are a lot of directors that can make a good script into a good movie (were there such a thing anymore), but not very many that can make a bad script into a good film. Keep in mind that great directors like Hitchcock and Wyler always worked with really good writers, that's part of what made them such a good directors.

Josh

Name: Angela
E-mail: ent.exch@dial.pipex.com

Josh

I have seen Life is Sweet (I infact have the video boxset) and really enjoyed the film is a great Mike Leigh venture great black comedy but I also can live without the restaurant subplot it adds nothing , but not seen Darling with Julie Christie can you recommend it?

This brings me to my next question I am leaving for the states in a weeks time what films do you recommend me catching while I am there, it is always one of the most important decisions to make, I know you don't necessarily go to the flicks but have you any idea what I should definitely see let me know is American Psycho worth the effort? I trust your judgement.

Dear Angela:

Thanks, but I haven't seen anything. I can, however, heartily recommend "Darling." It's very well-directed by John Schlesinger, has a snappy, Oscar-winning script by Fredric Raphael (who just co-wrote "Eyes Wide Shut"), and Julie Christie is as young and sexy as we'll ever get to see her and she too won an Oscar. It's also 1965 Carnaby St. which is a great place and look. Dirk Bogarde and Laurence Harvey are both very good, too. I give it three thumbs-up. Have fun in America, and make sure to stay on the proper side of the street.

Josh

Name: Alan
E-mail: picquick@aol.com

Josh,

Saturday evenings in the UK sees a series called "THE NEW ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD";very much in the HERCULES/XENA vein some episodes have been directed by Harley Cokeliss.The budget seems fairly high and they get some well known guest stars from both the US and UK(Christopher Lee to name but

one)What do you know of this show and what is the general opinion at Renpic of such homages/ripoffs e.g."SINBAD" and "ROAR"?

Dear Alan:

I haven't seen it, nor most of the other ripoff shows. I'm not much of a TV watcher, other than as a way to see movies . . . and, of course, "The Simpsons" (gotta laugh at something).

Josh

Name: Alan
E-mail: picquickstudio@aol.com

Dear Josh:

What is your opinion of the Michael Reeves movie "WITCHFINDER GENERAL" aka "THE CONQUEROR WORM"?I think it is an extraordinary piece of work.It came from an exciting era in British moviemaking,sadly long gone I fear.

Dear Alan:

I saw it as a young kid on TV and barely remember it, although I do recall finding it creepy and thinking Price was good. I'd love to see it again. Another one from that same weird British period was "Captain Kronos: Vampire Hunter" that was pretty cool.

Josh

Name: Angela
E-mail: ent.exch@dial.pipex.com

Dear Josh:

Sorry you don't much like Mike Leigh, I know his stuff maybe is an acquired taste, possibly a bit too English sometimes this is what draws me to a lot of his work but could maybe alienate others it can seem quite gloomy but I do love his black sense of humour.

I did not realise that the scriptwriters were not in New Zealand, that makes it easier for a little leeway. Nice to know you are the sort of director who talks to the actors about their roles and gets their feedback, often an actor knows more about their own role than the writer, especially on a long running series it must be occasionally frustrating for them to read lines they feel out of character.

Thanks for answering my questions, let me at this point just say how pathetic some of the comments being made here are from the Xena fans, especially in relation to Ted. I am a Xena fan also a big movie fan and really enjoy this site and fully appreciate your replies. We Xena fans are not all fruitcakes, and not all of us think you are responsible for everything that happens, the very fact that you are so accessible means you take the heat for every little thing that goes on oh well glad I got that off my chest. Hope you don't close the questions and answer section it would be a real shame if some minority of arseholes ruined it for everyone else.

Dear Angela:

Well, I won't close it down because there are the folks like you, the proud, the few, that have interesting and intelligent things to discuss. BTW, have you seen "Life is Sweet"? It made me howl with laughter, particularly the angry daughter. I also love the reality of the parents being the funny, light-hearted characters and the kids are the overly serious, grim ones. I can live without the entire restaurant sub-plot, however. Have you seen "Darling" with Julie Christie?

Josh

Name: Debbie
E-mail: Debrak1004@yahoo.com

Hey Ted, Donna, why don't you two grow up and get married, you already have so much in common. Leave this man alone. This is not Ted's site it is Becker's site. Write to Ted for God's sake. Better yet why don't you leave them both alone. Mr. Raimi is just a man as you are (loose term for Mr. Michaels) and has a right of his on life. Oh and by the way are you not the same Ted Michaels that was busted at excite for emailing young girls pretending to be Bruce Campbell, and Ted Raimi? Now ask me how I know this. Sorry Josh, they needed to hear this

Dear Debbie:

Well, that's sort of interesting, I suppose.

Josh

Name: Angela
E-mail: ent.exch@dial.pipex.com

Dear Josh:

Didn't realise that about David Lean, wow Bridge Over the River Kwai what a movie.

Have you ever watched anything by the British director Mike Leigh? I think he is absolutely great some films I would recommend would be Secrets and Lies and Career Girls and some of his early BBC stuff Abigail's Party and Nuts In May. A lot of his work springs totally from his actors improvisations and doesn't follow a script especially the early stuff this is how it evolved.

I noticed that you often say oh this line or that line was the actors idea, how much freedom do you allow the actor to improvise and does it depend on the script writer are some writers more lenient with their work than others and have you ever been in any confrontation with a script writer over a scene or interpretation of some dialogue?

Dear Angela:

I'm not a big fan of Mike Leigh, but I did enjoy "Life is Sweet" quite a bit. A number of his other films have bugged me, like "Naked." More times than not, I think that improvisational technique will turn against you.

Regarding the improvised lines on Xena, nothing is ever improvised in front of the camera, it's all done before we shoot. I discuss my concerns with the actors, give them what I have in mind and find out what they have in mind. We agree on what we'll shoot, then shoot it. Luckily for me, the script writers are not down in New Zealand so I don't have to deal with any of their comments.

Josh

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

Josh,

As I said, I very much agree with the story aspects -- but certainly conflict sequences (and, more to the point, "action" sequences) have their place! Hong Kong films, Westerns -- are great action sequences simply discounted? While they certainly can't by any means take the place of a solid story, I quite often enjoy seeing a good fight scene or two.

JT

p.s. if i'm not making myself clear, let me just go on record adding the statement, "ted no good me quit fan club how dare him have he live bad script xena hurt blah blah blah." I believe that sums it up nicely.

Dear JT:

When did you join the Xena fan club? And you already speak their secret language, very impressive. Is this whole line of questioning still in regard to "The Matrix?" I didn't think those were very good fight scenes myself, they were so clearly speeded up. Honestly, fight scenes don't interest me very much, and they interest me even less now that I've shot on hundreds of them on Xena and Herc and Jack. I dig all the fights in "The Warriors," but they're part of the plot, and better for it. But fights for the sake of fights doesn't interest me.

Josh

Name: Angela
E-mail: ent.exch@dial.pipex.com

Dear Josh: You are right about the commonwealth directors as soon as they show some promise they are seduced away to Hollywood and always have been remember, Hitchcock, David Lean etc. If you have not seen Trainspotting I can highly recommend it, also Lock Stock too.

My father was a script editor at Elstree Studios in the late 50's early 60's he used to tell me some cracking stories and you know some of the films from there were absolutely fabulous and the Ealing stuff, Kind Hearts and Coronets, Whiskey Galore, Passport to Pimlico, The Ladykillers etc, this was possibly the golden age of British film making, lots of these were made on very very tight schedules within weeks, it just goes to show that big budgets and long shooting schedules mean nothing. I remember you talking about the Kindred Spirits episode of Xena and if I remember correctly you did that in 8 days, sometimes a short deadline can give you focus and a big budget and a big deadline can make for a crap film. This is why some of the European and commonwealth films are so great. If you ever get a chance to see the film East is East, I can strongly recommend that one it is about an asian familiy in England in the 70's again not big budget but it hits the spot far more satisfying than any Matrix.

Dear Angela:

I love those movies! I particularly like "The Lavender Hill Mob" and "The Man in the White Suit." You are mistaken, however, about the great David Lean selling out to Hollywood. From "Summertime" onward he was working with international money and basically making independent films. "Kwai" and "Lawrence" were both for Sam Spiegel and Horizon Films, which was located in London. "Zhivago" was for Carlo Ponti, who was located in Rome. BTW, I had 5 days to shoot "Kindred Spirits," whereas most Xena eps are shot in 7-8. I've only had 8 days once, on "Warrior . . . Princess . . . Tramp," and that was because of the extensive amount of costume changes Lucy had to do.

Josh

Name: angela
E-mail: ent.exch@dial.pipex.com

Dear Josh:

You are right Willie Wyler did stay married after that point ironic or what? You know even if you know Warners really well the tour would be great fun there is so much to the lot, layers of history, thats the fun of LA and Hollywood although I live in England I visit as often as I can.

Which brings me to the next question the British film industry, I notice in your list a few classic Brit movies, Quadrophenia, Bridge Over The River Kwai etc, what do you think of the current Brit film industry films like Lock Stock of course and some of the other stuff, we of course don't make anything like as much as the US industry, but it seems to be in quite a revival and we seem to be making some good independant stuff the sort of films that would probably appeal to you, have you ever thought of working over here?

Dear Angela:

If someone over there offered me financing I'd be jolly pleased to make a British picture. I've seen a few British films lately that I've liked: "Love and Death on Long Island," "A Merry War" and, as I now check, "Gods and Monsters" wasn't British, but it felt like it due to Ian McKellan and that fact that it wasn't stupid. I have yet to see "Lock, Stock . . ." I liked "Trainspotting," too. There are also a lot more British films on my list than you're noting, since I have a lot of the 50s Ealing comedies, as well as several of the 60s Angry Young Man films. John Schlesinger was making all kinds of terrific pictures for a while there, as was Tony Richardson, Karel Reisz and Richard Lester. But, just like Britain's commonwealth countries Australia and New Zealand, as soon as a director shows some promise Hollywood ingests them, and rarely do they emerge alive.

Josh

Name: Ted Micheals
E-mail: tedmicheals@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

Since you are his buddy pal, pal, tell him this nice thing ot do to your joxer fans all of a sudden,And from me good bye and good riddance.Oh also Let him know I talked to several fans in chats in the xena chat on Toms xena page and they are all cancelling their memberships to his club.Especially when I got through talking.A

better Ted

Name: donna
E-mail: donna14@thespark.com

Dear Josh:

Lets all hope the xena show and all the other rob taperts shows get the axe,As well as anything Mr.raimi does,seeing as how a Mr micheals wrote to so many of us in the club and stated he has no care for his fans.That being Mr.Raimi of course.

Dear Ted & Donna:

If you both quit the Xena fan club, with all that extra time on your hands you can go back to school and learn grammar, spelling and punctuation--it's a blessing in disguise.

Josh

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

Josh,

On that documentary I mentioned -- don't let the title fool you. "Hands on a Hard Body" is about a contest they did at a car lot in Longview, Tx -- about 20 (or so) people placed one hand on the same hardbody pickup truck, and the last one to take their hand off gets to keep the truck. Reading my message, I realized that the title might sound like some kind of soft porn if you've never heard of it. *grin*

Another question : I've noticed a trend in your posts, and I'm curious if it's due to the nature of this forum (relatively short q&a, as opposed to dialogue) or if it's just the way you feel. Whenever you discuss a movie, it seems like storyline isn't just first in your mind - it's pretty much all that you care about. Things like cinematography, special effects, witty dialogue.. no credit, no dice. While I unquestionably agree that these things are secondary, I wonder.. do these elements not matter to you at all?

I would think something like the Matrix, even if you hated it, would at least get a vote of "hated the story, but i do have to admit it's visually impressive".. ?

JT

Dear JT:

But they weren't even very impressive visuals in "The Matrix." That "slice-of-life" effect is used in commercials constantly, the whole cocoon effect is right out of "Fire in the Sky" from a few years ago. It certainly had no witty dialog or good characterizations. As a writer/director everything you mentioned is important to me, but your basic story is the most important element in the whole mix. If the story isn't interesting, nothing around it means anything. Of course nice cinematography is a good thing to have, and if you hire a good D.P. that department is handled. Ditto with effects or sound. The bottom line, however, is: Tell me a story I want to hear. Movies, TV, theater, novels, it's all the same issue--is this story worth listening to? When discussing a good or great movie it makes sense to me to get into the specifics and details; when discussing a bad movie I'm generally not going to go into that kind of detail because there's bigger fish to fry.

Josh

Name: Tony
E-mail:

Josh.

Quick question. Since you're a friend of Ted's and from what we've heard here and elsewhere he is leaving Xena, have you heard from him on why he is leaving. Is he just tired of the travelling or does he just want to do different things, or what?

Thanks.
Tony

Dear Tony:

Yes, I think Ted just wants to move on to other things. He's done many, many episodes over the past four years, and he spent three years on "Sea Quest" right before that.

Josh

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

Josh,

I don't know if you are a big documentary watcher (I'm certainly not) but have you seen the film "Hands on a Hard Body"? I was amazed by how well the story was put together without being scripted... good editing, quite entertaining.

JT

Dear JT:

I love documentaries, although I've never heard of that one. I did just see "Wild Man Blues," Barbra Kopple's documentary on Woody Allen's European jazz tour, which I found fascinating.

Josh

Name: JawBone
E-mail: jawbone326@yahoo.com

Dear Josh:

This is probably going to be a stupid ass question. But do you know which schools in the San Deigo area, have good acting/directing/writing departments. I would like to get into the biz. So I just figured that a talented director such as yourself might be able to help me.

Thanks
JawBone

Dear JawBone:

I've never heard of any film school around San Diego. I think you'll have to come up to L.A.

Josh

Name: Angela
E-mail: ent.exch@dial.pipex.com

Dear Josh:

Wow yes William Wyler what a director, I think he managed to get the best out of Bette due to the turbulent relationship they had. "The Letter" was a great film and it was shot at a time in their relationship that was very intense, hows this for weird? Wyler sent Davis a letter asking her to marry him if she did not make her mind up within a day or so he would marry someone else, she saw the letter, was mad at him for a fight they had on set and did not open the letter, when she did it was too late, wowee what a weird coincidence, she was in a desperate state for the rest of the filming. Have you ever read Bette Davis' Autobiography "The Lonely Life", it was brought out after "Whatever Happened To Baby Jane", it makes for interesting reading but is hard to find a copy now.

Don't know if you have ever done this or not but Warner Bros in Burbank do a great tour, that is not really for tourists, I can thoroughly recommend it they know their stuff and so many many old sets, lots of Bette stuff of course, the cinema from Whatever Happened to Baby Jane still in use etc etc, its a great tour for anyone who really loves old Hollywood, you have to ring and book it and they go in small groups, I would reckon even for a director like you would it be fun to be tourist on this trip. The Guy who runs the museum worked with all the greats and has some fantastic stories.

Dear Angela:

The real joke, I guess, is that Wyler married at that point and stayed married for the remainder of his life, which was another 35 years--he was married for a short time to Margaret Sullivan before that. And no, I've never taken the Warner Bros. tour, although I've been on the lot many times over the years--that's where Bruce Campbell shot "Brisco County, Jr."

Josh

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

Dear Josh:

Just read your comments about shooting digital and was surprised. I always saw you as being like a jazz purist when it came to film. So, do you think that digital will eventually become the choice in filmmaking in the future? Making film itself obsolete? Or is it just a passing fad that for now helps financially cut corners for indie filmmakers?

Dear SlickWilly:

Digital is a developing technology. It hasn't gotten close to film's resolution yet, but it eventually will. Before that occurs, however, I think theaters will switch over to large TV screens showing DVDs, and if something is shot digitally it will be even more acceptable. For the time being, though, film looks a lot better.

Josh

Name: John
E-mail: jforde40@hotmail.com

Howdy Josh-

Name 10 absolute classic must see films. The best films of all time, the kind that if you have not seen, well- than you are an idiot.

Thanks,
JF

Dear John Forde:

Should I name 10 John Ford pictures? (BTW, when Ford used a fictitious version of himself in "The Wings of Eagles" his name was "John Dodge" and Ward Bond played him).

All right, John, here's 10 films in no particular order (although not necessarily my 10 favorites):

1. Lawrence of Arabia
2. The Bridge on the River Kwai
3. The Best Years of Our Lives
4. The Big Country
5. Marty
6. Psycho
7. The Docks of New York
8. Black Narcissus
9. The Quiet Man (gotta get John Ford in there)
10. Unforgiven

How about that?

Josh

Name: Brigitte St-Pierre
E-mail: brigittest_pierre@hotmail.com

Josh,

I want to tell you first that you are really a great director... I like man that can be intelligent and handsome, and you are both...

Well, I'll make it quick, we are (my sister and I) going to do our first movie this summer, and we are going to use a digital camera... What do you think about it?

We know that the quality of the image won't be as good as if we'd used something like 35mm, but what do you think!?! Do you have any suggestions!?!

Thank you for the time...

Dear Brigitte:

There's nothing wrong with shooting digital video, and you can, if the film is good enough and worth the expense, transfer it to 35mm (which probably costs about \$50,000 at this point, but if it's a good film, it's worth it). My suggestions to you, other than make sure you have a good script (by far the most important suggestion), are: light it well and get a decent exposure, because the dimmer the picture the worse it will transfer (which doesn't mean you can't have contrast, but make sure that the bright areas are bright enough and that way you can let the dark areas go as dark as you'd like); make sure you use a decent microphone on a boom (body mikes still don't work well enough); and use a tripod and say a wheelchair for dolly moves, don't hand-hold the whole thing, which becomes nauseating. Good luck and I hope you make a terrific picture.

Josh

Name: August

E-mail: joxerfan@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

I'm hoping that I understood you correctly, when you said that you wouldn't answer any more stupid Xena questions. I'm guessing that you're referring to the "Gabby sux" "Xena is hot" and "you ruined Lucy's career" questions? Because it would be a sad day indeed if you were to take down this Q+A section, or not, *on occasion* answer a few things about particular episodes. I myself really really enjoyed your description of the way you added songs to several episodes, and that's gotta be a year ago. Hopefully, serious questions about your directing techniques, even if they do relate to Xena, aren't *too* boring for you, if we keep them to a minimum. Would that work?

The reason that I ask is that for every silly heckling Xena fan, there are a hundred people who happen to enjoy that and other things too. I was into mythology 25 years before Herc + Xena, but through those I have discovered things such as Hong Kong action movies, and of course your own work.

Also, a suggestion - you are very gracious about posting *anything* that people send you. Maybe you (or your lovely webmistress?) could only post the ones that you want to take the time to answer? I don't think anyone would be offended if you did that, and just deleted the rest.

Oh, on Delbert Mann (and feel free to delete this part) - his first professional gig, before TV, was as resident director at a community theatre in Columbia, SC, in the late 40's. 40 years later, he agreed to come back to direct a special production (I think it was for an anniversary or a fund raising event.) Somehow or another I got cast in it, and he was a delight to work with. The play was the otherwise forgettable "Magnificent Yankee."

Thanks,
August

Dear August:

You can ask anything you want anytime you want and I'll do my best to answer. Yes, you are correct, it's the "Joxer sux" and "are Xena and Gaby lovers and will they ever come out of the closet?" bullshit that I'm no longer willing to deal with. Anything about filmmaking is swell. I kind of liked the movie, "The Magnificent Yankee," with Louis Calhern (it's the story of Supreme Court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, for those unfamiliar with it). BTW, I was in Las Vegas for my Dad's 70th birthday party.

Josh

Name: JawBone
E-mail: jawbone326@yahoo.com

Dear Josh:

I understand your feeling towards the matrix, but one thing you left out is, how much it resembles the bible in a way. Being that he (jesus) shall return. And saying that he could mold the matrix in the way that he sees fit. Overall I loved the movie, the gun fight scene was incredibal, I loved the way you could see every bullet hit. And the martial arts scene was really cool. They got the director from the 1993 movie "Iron Monkey" to do that scene. If you haven't seen Iron Moneky, I suggest that you do..the whole movie is non- stop action. Well comic action anyway. Granted the script could have been better, and they could have cast someone other than Keanu, to play neo. But in your review I felt that you did leave out a few things, or didn't get it. With the attire thing, in the movie they said that they have a load up section, to get weapons, training programs, clothes ect... So they just booted that up. And with the cellphones remark, even though Neo is a computer wizard, when running from the agents, how are you going to be able to sit down at a comp, and ask for assistance. Overall I thought the movie was very well done. Though it did have its troubles, like every movie has (look at Star Wars Episode 1). But The Matrix is an instant classic, non- the less. Lets hope the sequel is better. Thanks for your time

JawBone

Dear JawBone:

It's like the classic rock radio stations are always saying, "It doesn't have to be old to be a classic." Oh, yeah? Then what is the criteria? I'd say you have to minimally wait 20 years to proclaim something a classic, and I can assure you that no one on the planet Earth will remember "The Matrix" in 20 years, not even the filmmakers.

Josh

Name: Jason Roth
E-mail: rothj@river.it.gvsu.edu

Dear Josh,

I would second Drew's sentiments on keeping the Q & A page. You've got a lot of interesting opinions and thoughtful, wonderfully curmudgeoned (probably not a real adjective) advice to share. It would be a shame if this forum were closed because of the more rabid Xena fans.

I'm curious, have you ever seen the film Suddenly, from 1954? I found it in a bargain bin, and it turned out to be a really great unappreciated B&W crime thriller. Really intense Frank Sinatra performance- I'd only seen

the Rat Pack movies where he just coasted along. I guess Suddenly was suppressed, along with Manchurian Candidate after JFK's death. But Manchurian Candidate has a great critical reputation, while Suddenly is rarely, if ever mentioned. Just curious on your thoughts.

Jason

Dear Jason:

I don't know how I've managed to not see it, but I haven't. There was a while there, about 15 years ago, when Scott Spiegel was all geeked up on the film and showing the tape to everyone, but I missed it. I'll keep my eyes peeled, so to speak. I just saw particularly whacky and odd old movie, "Safe in Hell" (1931) directed by William Wellman--A hooker mistakenly kills a john and burns down his hotel, then goes and hides on the island of Tortuga, where they have no extradition laws, but now she's the only white woman on an island full of criminals and perverts. Pretty ridiculous.

Josh

Name: angela
E-mail: ent.exch@dial.pipex.com

Dear Josh:

I see on your list of fav films you include two of my own particular favs, All About Eve, and Whatever Happened to Baby Jane, what fabulous films and both starring the wonderful Bette Davis, I had the pleasure of meeting Bette before she died. Is she one of your fav actresses? Neither of these films would have in my opinion worked as well if they had been shot in colour, the light and shade really really adds to the plot especially in Whatever Happened to Baby Jane, I feel we have lost a lot by shooting just in colour do you agree, can you imagine some of the Hitchcock movies in colour yuck.

I sometimes think the golden age of movies is dead, pity we don't watch more movies like All About Eve and Whatever Happened to Baby Jane, would you have liked to direct in those so called golden days?

Dear Angela:

Yes, I love Bette Davis. Three of her other best films were directed by my man, William Wyler: "Jezebel," "The Letter" and "The Little Foxes," all three of which, if you haven't seen, you certainly ought to. And yes again, I certainly would have liked to have been in Hollywood in the 1930s and 40s. I would even have liked to have been here in the 1960s and early 70s. But being here now I feel like I was tricked--I was brought up on all these great films and they simply don't make them here anymore. Cie la vie, I guess. Regarding "All About Eve," which is just too good, there is a particularly wonderful scene when Bette is preparing for the party and Gary Merrill is following her around the living room defending Eve.

Josh

Name: DREW
E-mail:

Dear Josh:

I was wondering if you've seen any of Robert Downey Sr's movies, such as "Greaser's Palace" and "Putney Swope?" They're really interesting and avant-garde. Thanks.

Dear Drew:

I've seen them both. I even saw "Putney Swope" on it's original theatrical release, 30 years ago. I went with Andrea and Ivan Raimi, Sam's and Ted's older brother and sister. It was very funny in its day, and didn't hold up at all. I never cared for "Greaser's Palace;" just being odd is not sufficient for me.

Josh

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

Dear Josh:

Someone told me that although "THE LEGENDARY JOURNEYS" have come to an end we may see a new Rempic show in a couple of years called "HERCULES:THE MYTHICAL LABORS",a show much darker in tone where Hercules must atone for a tragedy that he has brought about.Any truth in this;I've heard less likely rumours.

Dear Alan:

I doubt it.

Josh

Name: Mario Malone
E-mail: celestial_eyes@yahoo.com

Hi Josh,

Why do you think that Michael Bay's style of directing has cause film critics and film buffs to declare him the "Satan of Cinema?"

Dear Mario:

I haven't heard this moniker attached to Michael Bay, and it sounds like so much more hyperbole. He does seem like a sloppy, thoughtless director that doesn't give a crap about the story, that shoots too many angles and cuts too much, but why hold this strictly against Mr. Bay, it's the problem of half the guys working.

Josh

Name: Alice Taylor
E-mail: aet200@is6.nyu.edu

Dear Josh:

I really enjoyed your reply to the Xena fan who blamed you for Ted Raimi wanting to leave the show. Yes, some Xena fans can be retarded. I am proud to say I am not one of them. I have enjoyed the episodes you've directed. If the Shoe Fits is a personal favorite of mine, it always makes me laugh. Thanks for your hard work.

Sincerely,
Alice Taylor

Dear Alice:

Thank you. I made a big generalization. I have no doubt that most Xena fans are perfectly normal, nice people.

Josh

Name: DREW
E-mail:

Dear Josh:

Don't worry Becker, there are still tons of guys like me out there who will ask you interesting questions whenever we feel the need. Keep your chin up. Thanks.

Dear Drew:

OK, man, I'm depending on you, don't let me down. Make sure to take your brain pills.

Josh

Name: Cheryl Ande
E-mail: cande@mail.sunlink.mail

Dear Josh:

Hi. I was reading your resume on your Xena work and was impressed with the fact that you wrote or directed a lot of my favorite episodes. I hope you don't mind but I had a question about Locked Up, Tied Down. When I watched the episode I felt there must have been a scene missing between Gabrielle and Thalassa where they had another talk. Did you write such a scene or was such a scene filmed? I know this a trivial question but I've wondered about it, so I thought I would ask. Thank you for your time.

Dear Cheryl:

No, there was just the one scene of Gaby using her massage technique on Thalassa, as I recall. Personally, I like the tone of that episode, it reminded me of earlier eps in the first season.

Josh

Name: Angela
E-mail: ent.exch@dial.pipex.com

Dear Josh:

Totally agree with your Matrix comments, I have been slagged off good and proper for not enjoying this film. I got the feeling throughout the whole film, they were making half a movie, with an eye to the sequel they wanted to make, they concentrated more on the style of the film than the content. This was a big disappointment to me after having really enjoyed the Wachowski (probably spelt that wrong) brothers other film Bound. I really enjoyed that film have you watched it? If so what did you think. That was a stylish movie, film noir in its essence but the plot wasn't sacrificed over style and the movie didn't leave you feeling cheated. Ok just my two cents worth, glad somebody else felt the Matrix was overhype.

Dear Angela:

I haven't seen "Bound," but since I now have 150 channels it will probably pop up soon and I'll watch it.

Josh

Name: Elizabeth
E-mail: elizabethannebennett

Hi Josh,

Thank you for the stories about Ted Raimi. They were funny.)

I was just wondering if you have seen the film Weekend, by Godard? If so, what are your impressions of it?

Take care.
Elizabeth

Dear Elizabeth:

"Weekend" is a more interesting Godard picture, but I still don't care for it, or any other Godard film, except "Breathless." Quite frankly, I think Godard shot his wad with "Breathless" and had nothing left afterward. I do love the documentary sections with the Rolling Stones in the studio in "Sympathy For the Devil," but the rest of the film is complete crap.

Josh

Name: Cathy
E-mail: purple.logic@virgin.net

Dear Josh,

If 'The Matrix' was set in tomorrow, would gun-powder driven guns be so out of place?

Dear Cathy:

But Larry Fishburne's gang of rebels are outside the Matrix, they're fighting it, and the Matrix is an illusion, right? But none of that matters, I think, because the ENTIRE POINT was to have extensive automatic weapon fire, just like "Die Hard" or "Predator," the reasons for it are beside the point.

Josh

Name: Valerie Duncan
E-mail: msduncan@home.net

Dear Josh:

I go to McNary High School, and in my English class we are supposed to get an interview from someone in the profession that we would like to enter. I want to be a motion picture director. If you would not mind do you think I could e-mail you the interview then you could reply back? If you wouldn't have time could you recommend someone else that I could speak with (via e-mail). Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,
Valerie Duncan

Dear Valerie:

No, you may not interview me for your school project. If this level of questions continues to come in I'm going to close this stupid Q&A section down. Ostensibly, it was to be a conversation about filmmaking, writing technique, perhaps a discussion about interesting movies. Sadly, it's mainly turned into drivel and I'm bored.

Josh

Name: Artemis
E-mail: artemis@inlink.com

Dear Josh:

Well I for one agree with you Josh! I have been sick of the whining fans since season 2. ;-)

Anyway... I thought you should see this from that Aussie site with the attitude... Bit rude of her/them if you ask me. Thanks for the great work you do, it is appreciated.

ARTEMIS
www.inlink.com/~artemis

13 April
The following is from Josh Becker's site about the rumoured departure of Ted Raimi from XWP - typos not mine and I just reprinted it as is.

Dear Josh:

i cannot believe you guys have witten out the joxer charecter ted raimi,too hell with the show now.members of his club will be pulling out.

Dear Donna:

What's wrong with you retarded Xena fans? I didn't do shit and I don't care if you watch the show or not. BTW, Ted is one that didn't want to be on the show anymore.

MaryD's response to Mr Becker

Dear Mr Becker - Be nice.

Dear Artemis:

People come my website and act creepy to me, but I'm supposed to be nice? Sorry, no go. From now on I'm simply not answering anymore silly Xena bullshit.

Josh

Name: robin goodman
E-mail:

Dear Josh,

For the record. I wasn't referring to you to take a chill pill. It's all the people who write to you and complain about xena and think it's your doing. I'm on your side. Like I said I watch the show regardless and am sick and tired of everyone who complains....

thank you for letting me express myself better...

Dear Robin:

I apologize if that's what you meant, although I probably should take a chill pill regarding the pushy, obnoxious Xena fans, but I just hate turning on my computer and finding all of these allegations and accusations. I'm just a guy who does a job.

Josh

Name: Robin Goodman
E-mail:

Dear Josh,

When will Joxer/Ted be written out. I never heard this until Donna wrote and bashed your head in. I love "xena" and watch regardless of who leaves the show.

And for all the "Xena fans" like: Donna and Ted's fan club members.....TAKE A CHILL PILL. YOU'LL GET

OVER IT..AND IF NOT WHO CARES...

sincerely,
Robin.....

Dear Robin:

This is not an inside track to Xena gossip. Ted's got a fan club, talk to them. As to my need to "take a chill pill," I'm simply tired of all this Xena nonsense coming in here and all of it has a snotty attitude attached, like I took Ted off the show or I put Ted on the show to start with. Xena fans have proven over and over to be a complete drag (except Xenamour, who is very nice), and I wish they'd simply stay the hell away from here.

Josh

Name: donna
E-mail: donna14@thespark.com

Dear Josh:

i cannot believe you guys have witten out the joxer charecter ted raimi,too hell with the show now.members of his club will be pulling out.

Dear Donna:

What's wrong with you retarded Xena fans? I didn't do shit and I don't care if you watch the show or not. BTW, Ted is the one that didn't want to be on the show anymore.

Josh

Name: august
E-mail: joxerfan

Dear Josh:

As I've mentioned, I think you are a closet stage director, and just don't know it yet. (Even though I remember you said recently that stage was not really an exciting place currently.) Still, from your numerous comments on paying attention to the text, the potential reaction from the audience, and the opinions of the actors, not to mention your continuous shot technique in "Running Time," there's more of the stage guy in you than you realize! (That's a compliment, by the way.)

So the question is - did you watch "Fail Safe" and or the live-action episode of "ER" - both of which were done in the tradition of the old live TV dramas from the 50's? If so, did you feel they were effective? If not, is that something you'd ever like to try? (I noticed you listed "Marty" as one of your favorites, and of course it had its start as a live TV drama. I had the great pleasure to do a stage play with Delbert Mann many years later, and you are a spiritual cousin to him as far as theories on working with actors!)

Thanks,

August

Dear August:

I've seen the film "Fail Safe" many times and it certainly seems like a film of its day, meaning 1964 (and, of course, it got killed that year at the box office by the comedy version, "Dr. Strangelove"), but I missed the new version. The live ep of "ER" was pretty good. I must say that so much of what interests me about film is how it's shot and how it's edited and stage doesn't offer that. Live TV doesn't offer it particularly well, either--there's not much you can do with that three-camera set-up. BTW, I like the film version of "Marty" much better than the TV version (and you worked with Delbert Mann? How cool).

Josh

Name: Pussy Galore
E-mail:

Josh,

Is that Disco Era picture really you? If it is, I must say...you are a very attractive man. :-)

Meow,
PS

Dear Pussy Galore:

I must be dreaming. Yes, that was me 20-odd years ago, 25 pounds ago, and a million cigarettes ago.

Josh

Name: Art
E-mail: art_097@aol.com

Dear Josh,

Have you seen Rushmore? If so, what did you think of Bill Murray's performance, the musical score, and the children actors?

Also, do you have a list of films that you do NOT like on your web page?

Thank you

Dear Art:

I saw the actual Mt. Rushmore, but not the movie. I did make a Worst List and it was so insulting to so many of my friends I took it down.

Josh

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