

# SBIFF

# 10-10-10

## SCREENWRITING & FILMMAKING MENTORSHIP & COMPETITION

### MENTORS



#### **Guy Smith- Program Director**

Guy Smith has worked extensively with media, communications and film in his 40 year career at Santa Barbara City College and Antioch University, both as a Dean and faculty member. He has been the lead in helping to establish media arts and film programs at multiple colleges in Southern California. For the past 18 years, he has worked with the Santa Barbara International Film Festival as Director of 10-10-10, the student filmmaking competition. He received his B.A. & M.F.A. in creative writing from San Diego State University before completing doctoral coursework in rhetoric and linguistics at the University of Southern California.



#### **Mimi deGruy- Program Director**

Mimi Armstrong deGruy is a Santa Barbara-based documentary filmmaker. Along with her late husband, Mike deGruy, she has produced numerous hours of award-winning television for National Geographic Television, The BBC and other broadcasters. Earning a B.A. from Yale University, Armstrong deGruy's career began through work with CNN, Turner Broadcasting's series *Portrait of American* and the PBS series *The Infinite Voyage*. A mother of two, she believes wholeheartedly in the power of community and its ability to affect change, and is an active nonprofit volunteer. She is the director of *Diving Deep: The Life and Times of Mike deGruy* (Mountainfilm 2019).



### **Ross Brown - Screenwriting Mentor**

Ross Brown is the Program Director for the MFA in Writing & Contemporary Media at Antioch University, Santa Barbara. He began his writing career on NBC's award-winning comedy *The Cosby Show* and went on to write, produce and create comedies for ABC, CBS and The WB. He is the author of the book *Create Your Own TV Series for the Internet*. His full-length plays *Hindsight* and *Trapped* have had staged readings at The Pasadena Playhouse and The Barter Theater in Virginia. Prior to his writing career Professor Brown worked as an assistant director on feature films including *National Lampoon's Vacation*.



### **Josh Conviser - Screenwriting Mentor**

Josh grew up in Aspen, Colorado and attended Princeton University. Josh has focused on crafting stories, both writing his own and cultivating others'. He has written, re-written and adapted numerous projects for film and television; notably, he co-wrote the story bible and was Executive Consultant on the HBO's *Rome*. Also on his resume are several novels, which include *Echelon and Empyre*, published by Random House. His novels often infuse elements of both sci-fi and spy thrillers as evidenced in his recently finished *End Game*, a modern-day thriller tackling issues of crowd sourcing and the gamification of spying.



### **Leslie Ekker - Visual Effects Mentor**

Leslie Ekker has 40+ years of experience in VFX. Leslie got his start in 1979 on the film *Star Trek: the Motion Picture*. He then began model-making on *Bladerunner*. He has lent his creative touch to such projects as *True Lies*, *Apollo 13*, *Titanic*, *Bladerunner*, *Ghostbusters*, *2010*, *Die Hard*, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* and *Close Encounters: Special Edition* and *Adaptation*. He has also worked on over 120 commercials, six TV Pilots, a dozen Special Projects and directed 12 commercials. For his work on *Apollo 13*, Leslie was nominated for the Academy Award in Visual Effects and won the British Academy Award for Visual Effects. Leslie brings a creative and practical design conscious scientific approach.



### **Olivia Harris - Casting Mentor**

Olivia Harris studied acting at Carnegie Mellon, Boston University, Second City, Chicago, and under guidance of Grotowski in Poland and Herbert Berghof in NY. For nearly twenty years, Olivia has been a casting director for Warner Bros television and movies, working on Warner Bros pilots and Clint Eastwood movies with Phyllis Huffman. Once the head of the New York Warner Bros network, she has also cast many independent features, television shows and movies. Some projects include ABC pilot *Grace*, *The Last New Yorker*, and *Easy* which premiered at Sundance and Toronto International Film Festival. She was also involved in casting *Superstar*, *Space Cowboys*, and *Mystic River*.



### **Jeff King - Screenwriting Mentor**

Jeff King has been a working television and film writer since 1991 and a mentor for the SBIFF 10-10-10- since 2008. He has written, rewritten and adapted screenplays for Fox, Sony, MGM, Universal, Disney, Warner Brothers, working along the way with producers Martin Scorsese, Sydney Pollock, and Basil Iwanyk amongst others. He has worked on several TV series including *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *Models Inc.*, *American Gothic*, and *Kidnapped*. Earlier this year, his first book, *Rebound: Regain Strength, Move Effort-lessly*, and *Live Without Limits* will be published by Hachette.



### **Paul Kurta - Screenwriting Mentor**

Since beginning as a freelance producer in New York City, Paul Kurta has worked with several notable writer-directors, producing two seasons of *Tales of the Unexpected* for Academy-Award Winner Bert Salzman and collaborating on *Q: The Winged Serpent* with the legendary Larry Cohen. Paul also produced *Miles From Home*, which was an official selection to Cannes in 1988, and has produced and line-directed for several films (*Empire Records*, *Tomcats*, *The Gingerbread Man*) involving notable members in film such as legendary Robert Altman, actors Kenneth Branagh, Robert Downey Jr., Renee Zellweger, etc. Paul also produced the first season of *Veronica Mars* and the pilots for *The Odds*, *Hell on Wheels*, and *Pan Am*.





### **Perry Lang - Screenwriting Mentor**

Beginning as an actor at 17, he acted in Steven Spielberg's *1941* and John Sayle's *Sunshine State* amongst others. His television work includes *M\*A\*S\*H*, the title character in Emmy-winning Hewitt's *Just Different*, *A Rumor Of War*, and numerous guest appearances, several of which he wrote and directed himself. Perry began professionally writing on *Tales From the Darkside* in New York, and wrote the first film he directed, *Little Vegas*, and then rewrote the second, *Action Adventurer; Men of War*. Since then, Perry has directed over sixty hours of television including *ER*, *Weeds*, and *NCIS: Los Angeles*. His latest film, *An Interview with God*, was released in August 2018. Perry is also on the directing faculty at the AFI Conservatory.



### **Glenn Leopold - Screenwriting Mentor**

Glenn Leopold is a three-time Emmy nominee (Disney's *Doug*, *The Smurfs*, *The Town Santa Forgot* starring Dick Van Dyke) who has written hundreds of animated episodes for shows such as *Scooby-Doo*, *Fantastic Four*, *Pink Panther and Sons*, and many more. He is credited on several feature-length animations for best-selling direct-to-video movies in the *Scooby-Doo* and *Flint-stones* franchise. Glenn also has written live-action sitcoms (*The Prowler*, *Too Scared to Scream*) and is an accomplished singer-songwriter, with his songs appearing in *Doug*, *Tis The Season To Be Smurfy*, and *Scooby-Doo and the Witch's Ghost*.



### **Joe Medjuck - Screenwriting Mentor**

Joe Medjuck was born in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. He received his BA in Honors English from McGill University and his MA and PhD from the University of Toronto where he taught for 12 years and founded the Cinema Studies Program at Innis College. While teaching at U of T, Medjuck also worked as a journalist for the film magazine *Take One*, *The Canadian Forum*, *The London Times Literary Supplement*, *The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation* and *TV Ontario*. His producing credits include the films: *Stripes*, *Ghostbusters*, *Beethoven*, *Kindergarten Cop*, *Space Jam*, *Road Trip*, *Old School*, *Eurotrip*, *Disturbia*, *Chloe*, *Up in the Air*, *No Strings Attached*, *Hitchcock* and *Draft Day*. Medjuck was one of the founders of The Criterion Collection. He lives in Montecito, California with his wife Laurie Deans.



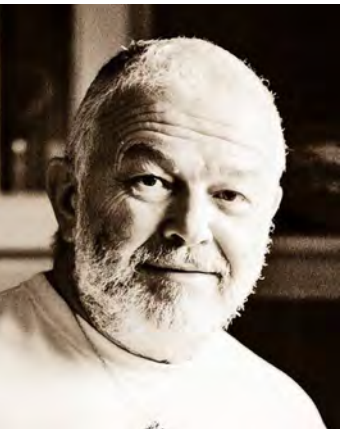
### **James Read - Directing Mentor**

A professional actor and director since 1981, James Read is best known for his starring role opposite Patrick Swayze in the epochal Civil War mini-series, *North & South*. He held regular roles in several television series including *Charmed*, *Wildfire*, *American Dreams* and *Persons Unknown*, and has starred and guest-starred in *CSI:NY*, *Castle*, *Columbo* and *Cheers*. James has had major roles in the feature films *Eight Men Out*, *Beaches*, and *Legally Blonde*. As a member of the Directors Guild of America, he has directed episodic television, commercials and documentary films, including his short film documenting a family visit to the Hadzabe tribe of hunter-gatherers in Tanzania which has 625,000 views on YouTube.



### **David Schneiderman - Sound Mentor**

After being mentored by sound mixer Keith Wester, David Schneiderman has won an Emmy Award (*Hill Street Blues*), and collected six more nominations which include *Brooklyn Bridge* and *LA Law*. His first feature film as a sound mixer was *Grand Theft Auto* directed by Ron Howard. He recently finished two documentaries, the Channel Islands-focused *West of the West* for the Discovery Channel and *Tab Hunter Confidential*. His career has enabled him to work with Ron Howard, Henry and Peter Fonda, Tab Hunter, Mohammed Ali, Rock Hudson, Mia Farrow, Sean Connery, Ronald Reagan, John Huston, Bill Murray, Sarah Jessica Parker, Brian DePalma, Paul Williams, Leonard Nimoy, William Shatner, Sharon Stone, Bruce Springsteen, and Dick Clark.



### **Sascha Schneider - Producing Mentor**

Sascha was born in Riga, Latvia and immigrated to Los Angeles in 1961. His first job in the industry was with David Wolper Productions as head of research, then he worked with an international line producer on many documentaries including *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, National Geographic Specials, and the Academy Award-Winning feature documentary, *Hellstrom Chronicles*. Simultaneously, Sascha facilitated inter-generational healing workshops for children of holocaust survivors and Nazis in Germany, and obtained a masters in marriage and family therapy. He transitioned to television UPM/Line Producer on the award winning series *Hill Street Blues*. Since the mid-eighties, he has been producing television series all over the world.



### **Leslie Zemeckis - Directing Mentor**

Leslie Zemeckis is a best-selling author, actress, and award-winning documentarian. Leslie's critically acclaimed films include *Behind the Burly Q*, and *Bound by Flesh* which debuted at number 5 on Netflix, and her newest film is *Grandes Horizontales*. Zemeckis is the author of three best-sellers, *Behind the Burly Q*, *the definitive oral history of burlesque*, *Goddess of Love Incarnate; the Life of Stripteuse Lili St. Cyr* and *Feuding Fan Dancers*, about Sally Rand, Faith Bacon and the golden age of the showgirl (a SCIBA finalist for biography). Honored for her work inspiring women, in 2022 Zemeckis will be awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor in part for "sharing and preserving stories of women who were once marginalized and stigmatized . . ." but due to her work "these women are now celebrated for their independence and personal agency." Past recipients include Presidents Clinton and Reagan, Elie Wiesel, Sen. John McCain and HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco.



### **Tracy Trotter - Directing Mentor**

Three- time Emmy winning cinematographer Tracy Trotter has worked on hundreds of national television commercials, music videos and industrial films. He worked as a Director of Photography on commercials for Honda, Pepsi, Minute Maid, Proctor & Gamble, Maxwell House Coffee, Rock the Vote, Showtime, Ford Trucks, the Grammy's, and political campaigns. Tracy taught Cinematography at Brooks Institute from 1999 to 2016. Tracy is also a co-owner of TrotterProductions since 1990.



### **Judy Trotter - Directing Mentor**

Co-owner of TrotterProductions since 1990 and a Member of the Director's Guild of America as an Assistant Director, Judy Trotter has worked on Grammy-winning music videos, Clio-winning commercials and Emmy-winning television shows. Judy has worked with Stevie Wonder, Gwen Stefani, Eminem, Rod Stewart, Dr Dre, Snoop Dogg, and Bon Jovi. Her commercial credits include AT&T, Ford, Toyota, CBS, Kodak, McDonald's, Pepsi, Coca Cola, Kellogg's, Pizza Hut, Lexus, and American Express. Over the past sixteen years, Judy has taught film courses at Brooks Institute and received the Educator of the Year award in Community Outreach in the Arts in 2014.





### **Robert Sternin and Prudence Fraser - Screenwriting Mentors**

Best known for their work in television, Rob and Pru have written, produced, developed and created over a dozen prime time series, from ABC's *Who's the Boss?* to CBS's *The Nanny*, which they developed and executive produced with series star Fran Drescher. Other shows include *Alice*, *Three's Company*, Madeline Kahn's *Oh Madeline*, *The Charmings*, *Live In*, *Married People*, *Run of the House*, and *The Simple Life* with Judith Light. Recently, they wrote the book and lyrics for the stage musical *The Girl Who Would Be King*, wrote the animated feature film *Flushing Art* for 20th Century Fox, and are currently developing both a music oriented television series and feature film project for the Tannenbaum Co./Warner Brothers.



### **Kate Juergens - Screenwriting Mentor**

Kate Juergens was with ABC Family from 2004 to 2014, helping create the network's brand-defining scripted programs including *The Secret Life of the American Teenager*, *Pretty Little Liars*, *Switched at Birth*, *The Fosters* and *Chasing Life*. She was charged with overseeing and being responsible for the creation of the network's primetime original series, movies and specials. Prior to joining ABC Family, Juergens was senior vp development at The WB, where she was responsible for series programming and oversaw *Smallville*, *Gilmore Girls*, *Angel* and *Reba*. She began her career at NBC, where she held various positions, including VP Programming, and was involved with *Will and Grace*, *The West Wing* and *Frasier*. She was also a producer at Primary Entertainment. Juergens appeared THR's Women in Entertainment Power 100 list in 2009.

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### ALUMNI ADVISORS



#### **Leah Bleich - Alumni Advisor**

Leah Bleich is an LA-based director, producer and writer. A mentee of director Cathy Yan ("Birds of Prey"), Leah recently completed her feature directorial debut, "The Moon & Back," as one of five filmmakers selected out of over 350 applicants for "The Six Feet Apart Experiment," a ground-breaking filmmaking competition from Wayfarer Studios. Her short films have screened at festivals across the world, notably including the LA Music Video Festival, where her short "Elsewhere" won Best Student Music Video. Leah is currently a selected filmmaker in MTV Entertainment Studios's inaugural First Time Director's Initiative. Leah is also a Development Executive. During her time at Solstice Studios, she worked closely on the development and production of the films "Unhinged" starring Russell Crowe and "Hypnotic" starring Ben Affleck. She's currently a Creative Executive in Comedy TV Development at Just For Laughs, where she has helped produce projects with talent including Bob Odenkirk, Nicole Byer, Nikki Glaser, and Pete Holmes.



#### **Will Hahn- Alumni Advisor**

Will Hahn is hockey player turned filmmaker based in Southern California. He has worked on large scale productions across the United States for companies such as Southwest, FedEx, LA Kings and more. Will graduated from California State University Northridge with a degree in documentary film production. During the 2022 season will served as the Production Assistant for the LA Kings production department. In this role he created a wide range of content, from social media edits to tributes for franchise players.





### **Julia Kupiec - Alumni Advisor**

Julia is a Brooklyn based director of narrative, music video, and commercial work. Her work is driven by an intentional visual style and intimate performances. Julia's background as a cinematographer has given her the ability to introduce motivated camera work and a filmic quality to her projects, whether scripted or documentary. She's directed spots and content for Columbia Records, MTV, People Magazine and the US Air Force. In 2022, Julia was shortlisted for the Young Director Award at Cannes and received 8 nominations across 3 projects at the Berlin Commercial Awards.



### **Quinolyn Benson-Yates - Alumni Advisor**

Quinn grew up in the DIY punk scene in Berkeley in the late 90's, which supercharged her ambitious artistic ventures from a young age. She discovered a joy for the collaborative nature of filmmaking while attending UC Santa Barbara, where she wrote, directed, and produced many award-winning films (including the 10-10-10 program!). Quinn recently finished her first directorial feature documentary film, and is currently pursuing an MFA in Film & Television Production at USC School of Cinematic Arts.



### **Josh Bevan - Alumni Advisor**

Josh Bevan is a 2020 UCSB alum, filmmaker and tech artist. He has been known to work in LA as an editor of short narratives and feature documentaries, and as a freelance sound mixer and DI colorist. When he can, he also writes and produces his own narrative shorts, which infuse character dramas with spoken word poetry, kinetic movement, and glitch art. He participated in the 10-10-10 four years in a row as an editor, director, VFX artist and Gaffer, three of those films winning the filmmaking award.