News

Discoverys' "Revised" Policy on Credits Challenged

The ASC and the ICG have joined an industry-wide coalition organized by the International Documentary Association (IDA), consisting of organizations representing writers, directors, producers, cinematographers, editors, and other filmmakers who have taken a unified stance opposed to Discovery Communications' proposals to eliminate on-air credits.

Discovery executives cite a study that indicates that 30% of its audience is surfing away from its channels during the time it takes to air credits. They initially revealed plans to eliminate all on-air credits in a series of confidential meetings with producers. The cable company has subsequently responded to a negative reaction by filmmakers by modifying its position and offering producers a choice of on-air credits or website listings of credits.

The American Society of Cinematographers, one of the oldest existing oranizations in the motion picture industry has traditionally been one of the guardians at the gate when the integrity of the art form has been challenged by vested commerical interests. "The public has a right to know who is responsible for programs aired on television," said ASC President Steven Poster. "Everyone who works on a film contributes to the point of view that it presents to audiences, and every film has many co-authors who deserve recognition."

"We are glad they [Discovery] are listening to the many filmmakers who were appalled by their original plan," said Poster, " but their new proposal is still not in the public interest....We see it is a direct attack on current filmmakers who have provided the lifeblood for Discovery's channels....If Discovery succeeds, other television channels are likely to follow their lead."

The International Cinematographers Guild has some 6000 members, including cinematographers and crewmembers who produce a large majority of narrative films in the U.S. for cinema and television, most national and regional commercials, and news and documentary programs for the major networks and TV stations in larger markets. ICG President George S. Dibie commented, "Our members are co-authors of the films they create. Credits in titles are an affirmation of their work, like a by-line in a newspaper or a signature on a painting. It is also important for the public to know who is involved in the production of nonfiction films that have a point-of-view."

Additional information on this controversy is available at www.cinematographer.com or www.cameraguild.com.

Starz Encore Installs Colossus System

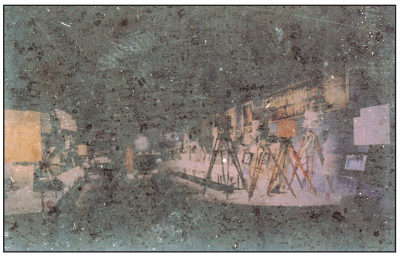
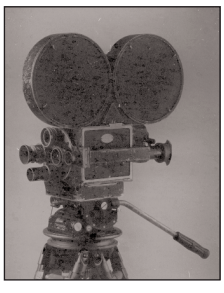
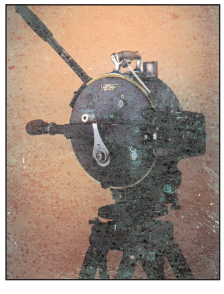
Starz Encore Group, provider of cable and satellite-delivered premium movie channels in the U.S., has gone to air with OmniBus Systems' Colossus, a new 40-channel master control and on-air playback facility. Colossus is a multi-delivery automation and control system that bridges the gap between video, audio, internet, and data-streaming applications, while addressing the needs of broadcasters to rapidly apply enormous numbers of exiting channels to their output. Using proven OmniBus device drivers that control traditional equipment, as well as innovations such as data streaming technology, Colossus provides a timeline display that allows the operator to instantaneously monitor the status of up to 1000 channels and focus in on any single stream, confirm its data, and drive it in the traditional manner should the schedule require it—i.e., live sports events or breaking news.

Winsted Acquires Technical Interiors

Winsted, a manufacturer of modular consoles for the video and security industries has announced the acquisition of Atlanta-based Technical Interiors, a custom console designer and manufacturer founded in the mid-1980s. T.I. is knows for producing ergonomically designed and architecturally appealing control rooms. Its designers are skilled in the science of human factors engineering, which integrates lighting, acoustics, logistics, organization dynamics, and communications elements.

Winsted President Randy Smith pointed out, "This acquisition is very exciting for us because it expands our product line while combining our in-stock modular product strengths with that of the custom designers at Technical Interiors. Their reputation... and experience will be a perfect fit with Winsted."

Errata

May 2002 *Journal*: Ohio Section Meeting, March 14, 2002. In the last paragraph on p. 231, SCMH-TV should read WCMH-TV.

May 2002 *Journal*: The figures on p. 205 in the article on Historical Equipment Collections were flipped: the AMMI core exhibition; the Wall Camera (which also appeared on the *Journal* cover); and the Akeley Camera. They are reprinted here in the correct position.