

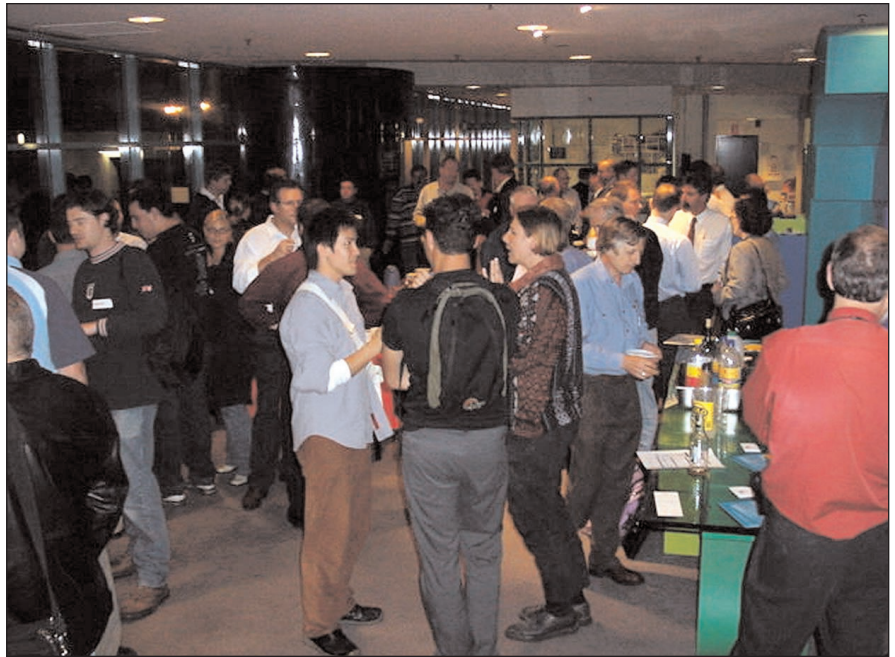
# SMPTE Australia Section Post-NAB Report

An audience of nearly 70, many of them first-time SMPTE Section Meeting visitors, heard and watched five entertaining and enlightening panelists turn the Australian Film and Television and Radio School's (AFTRS) auditorium into Las Vegas for a night with their news and views on April's NAB 2002.

The post-NAB panel represented a range of disciplines and included Mike Seymour, creative director, Kotij, a post-production facility set up totally in high definition; Stephen R. Smith of Tracks Television, an audio post-production facility for TV series work, fully equipped for surround sound; Ron Korpi, IT manager, Omnilab, a post-production facility; Phillip Guilfoyle, designer, Miller Tripods; and Phil Sandberg, journalist, *TV Technology Magazine*. Each brought a unique perspective to the panel.

Section Chair John Maizels introduced the evening's program with a showing of the student reel from the AFTRS Graduation, held in April, at which the SMPTE Australia Section presented the Section-sponsored award for "Creative Use of Technology in a Student Production." This year the award was given to Bill Chen for 3D Animation and Direction. His submission *Placement* was shown in full and is regarded by all as an excellent piece of work. Chen wins a one-year full membership to SMPTE as well as a cash award.

As part of the re-invention of SMPTE from its traditional engineering base to an all-embracing creative and technical industry mouthpiece, Maizels enthusiastically supported the international slogan explaining SMPTE's raison d'être as "...the leading technical society for Motion Imaging Professionals." The Post-NAB Section Meeting proved a perfect



*A large crowd assembled for the Post-NAB meeting of the Australia Section.*



*Section Chair John Maizels introducing the program for the April meeting.*

example of this statement, with speakers placing much of the advanced technology on show into an accessible, operational context.

Mike Seymour, the first speaker, showed two videos of a SMPTE Australia first, a Section meeting held in Hollywood on the Friday before NAB. Fifteen Australian members turned up for the meeting, which commenced with a lunch sponsored by Kodak at the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC), attended by many of the leading DOPs from Hollywood. The afternoon was devoted to a visit to E-Film, a facility house specializing in digital grading and scanning back to film. The Hollywood SMPTE Section hosted dinner, followed by a visit to the El Capitan Cinema for a digital showing of the Disney film *The Rookie*. This presentation was very interesting to those who have not seen this technology in operation before. Even Hollywood sees this

as an exercise in new technology, and the cinema runs a 35mm copy ... just in case.

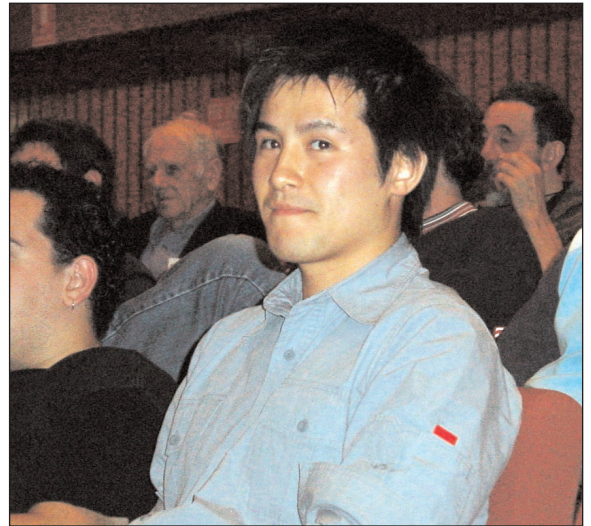
Smith reported that, with the new South Hall open, NAB 2002 required a lot of walking, although fewer exhibitors and visitors made it easier to get around and talk to people in the booths. His overall impression of NAB was there was little that was new; it was a "consolidation year." Economic conditions around the world are very flat, and this was reflected at NAB.

Phillip Guilfoyle provided an interesting overview; his work focus is mechanical design for Miller Tripods, but at NAB he was able to look at all booths with an independent eye. He echoed the sentiment of not-much-difference in product or displays this year. He was most intrigued by one booth that appeared to be just white circular lounges, which, with continual meetings, gave the impression of the Mad Hatter's tea party from *Alice in Wonderland*. There was no indication of what the company sold or supplied.

Ron Korpi was looking at telecine operations and equipment. He was also part of the visiting party to SMPTE Hollywood and believed that the E-Film visit was the best display of all.

He was most impressed with the processing power required to digitize large amounts of film data, digital color grade, and back to film through laser film recorders. Coming from Australia, where every hi-def telecine has to work hard to justify its existence, he was amazed to find two C-Reality telecines permanently tied up just doing digital grades for DVD production.

Phil Sandberg covered the press conferences of the many companies at NAB, as well as trying to cover all of the booths and equipment on show. He lamented the decline over recent years of the "freebies" in the press packs. The serious side of this is a reflection of economic times as well as the ready dispersion of information electronically via corporate websites. He gave the tick to Sony for the best press conference and cleared the mystery of the all-white booth, revealing it to belong to a company creating software for asset management and systems integration.



Bill Chen award winner for 3D Animation and Direction.

The success of the Post-NAB night forms an excellent springboard to other events planned for SMPTE Australia Section members and industry professionals during the lead up to the next SMPTE Conference and Exhibition in July 2003. According to Maizels, the long-term objective of the Society is to stage more section meetings, overseas and around Australia, allowing more people to access the wealth of information SMPTE offers through its membership and industry profile.

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