

# Message from the Editorial Vice President

Peter Ludé



“Everything you always wanted to know about Digital Cinema”

There is said to be an ancient Chinese curse, which loosely translates: “May you live in interesting times.” For engineers involved in moving imaging technology, our times are remarkably “interesting.” In the U.S., most analog television broadcast transmitters will sign-off for the final time in less than a year from now. After more than a half-century, digital terrestrial broadcast technology will replace the incumbent NTSC analog systems. Music CD’s have been largely displaced by digital downloads. Television viewing is migrating from a living room experience to a mobile activity. And in cinemas around the world, 35mm film projectors are being replaced with new digital cinema projection systems.

This last topic will be the focus of this year’s Digital Cinema Summit, being held April 12 and 13, 2008, in conjunction with the NAB Show in Las Vegas. Once again, SMPTE has the honor of organizing and presenting this exciting two-day lineup, in collaboration with the Entertainment Technology Center at the University of Southern California (ETC-USC). During the two-day Summit, over 50 speakers, all experts in their field, will explain the significant advancements in digital cinema over this past year. With nearly 5,000 digital screens now operating worldwide, and hundreds of film titles digitized for distribution, there is a wealth of real-world experience revealing what’s been working well, and where work still remains.

The topics for this year’s Digital Cinema Summit will cover the entire process from digital acquisition, through post-production, DI, mastering, distribution, and exhibition at the theater. Technical presentations will include the latest 2K and 4K cinema cameras, advancements in the DI process, stereoscopic production and display technology, laser projection, and content security considerations. We’ll also learn how digital cinema affects the production trades, such as lighting, wardrobe, and makeup, and hear reports on the latest work by DCI, SMPTE DC28, ISDCF, and NATO. This summit will provide a unique opportunity for attendees to gain a comprehensive update on all of the important developments taking place in digital cinema. We hope you will be able to attend.

As chair of the program committee for this important event, I have had the pleasure of working with a distinguished committee, consisting of Wendy Aylsworth from Warner Bros. Studios, John Hurst of CineCert, Michael Karagosian of MKPE Consulting, Tom Scott of OnStream Media, and David Wertheimer, executive director of the Entertainment Technology Center at USC. Many long days of work went into organizing this event, and we are indebted to the committee members for their efforts and expertise.

By the way, that ancient Chinese curse about “interesting times” is apparently neither ancient nor Chinese. The phrase was made popular by a June 1966 speech by Robert F. Kennedy, and its origin has been traced to a 1950 science fiction story, “U-Turn” by Duncan H. Munro. That seems somehow fitting.