

DAVID H. SPERLING

Video, Film & Software

870 Sycamore Avenue Tinton Falls, NJ 07724 (732) 530-7706 (732) 245-2565 - Cell
daves@onsetsoftware.com www.hdvdp.com www.onsetsoftware.com vimeo.com/davesperling

Overview

- More than 30 years professional production experience in the film and video industries, the past 25 spent primarily as Director of Photography for television series, specials, motion pictures and documentaries.
- Additional work experience in many other aspects of film making, including editing (both film & video), sound recording, production management, producing, writing and directing.
- Creator and developer of the OnSet Software computer programs for theatre, film and video.
- Current member of Sony ICE (Independent Certified Experts) team, receiving special training in new technologies, providing design consulting, and speaking at trade shows, panels and sponsored events.
- Guest lecturer for film production classes at local universities, including SVA, Columbia and NYU, as well as adjunct teaching for film/video production programs at technical schools..
- Member of *National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences* (Emmy Awards Voter) and *International Cinematographers Guild* (IATSE Local 600).
- MFA Degree in film production from New York University Graduate Institute of Film & Television.
- And above all, an ability to understand technologies, analyze and solve problems with an eye to quality.

Director of Photography / Cinematographer

Television -- Series

- ◆ *Remember WENN* - Four seasons of AMC drama series set in 1938 radio station. (**Cable Ace Award**)
- ◆ *The Royale* - American Movie Classics family drama series set in 1949 movie theater.
- ◆ *Mathnet* - Three seasons of detective comedy series for CTW / PBS. (**Emmy Nomination**)
- ◆ *Building America's Home* - 10 episode documentary series for Discovery following construction of a *Better Homes and Gardens* house from concept and design through construction to completion..
- ◆ *Greatest Sports Legends* - Four seasons of sports documentaries plus two 90 minute specials.

Television -- Specials

- ◆ *Assume the Position 201* - HBO Comedy Special with Robert Wuhl.
- ◆ *Coollest Science Museums* - Discovery Science show highlighting America's top science museums.
- ◆ *Elle Deco: Behind the Design* - Profiles of ten top international designers for Discovery Home.
- ◆ *POWER: The Eddie Matos Story* - HBO *Life Stories* drama about youthful drug dealer's rise.
- ◆ *Jack Paar: Smart Television* - Interviews for special about talk show host.
- ◆ *Modern Marvels* - Shows: *Bridges of New York*, *Central Park*, *The Hindenberg*, *Skyscrapers*.
- ◆ *First Robotics* - Discovery Science show about national robot design/ implementation competition.
- ◆ *Oz On Ice* - Performance and behind-the-scenes special about Wizard of Oz ice show.
- ◆ *Magical Makeover* - ABC Afterschool Special about image.
- ◆ *Wayne's World II Special* - Studio Comedy Special with Wayne & Garth for MTV.
- ◆ *Off Limits* - CBS Schoolbreak Special about media censorship.
- ◆ *'Tis The Season: A Hawaiian Christmas Story* - Syndicated seasonal drama special.
- ◆ *Race For Tomorrow* - Prime Time Special about life after an ecological disaster.
- ◆ *MTV Half-Hour Comedy Hour* - Location segments for comedy series.
- ◆ *Way USA I & II* - Way-Out comedy docu-travelogues produced and aired by MTV.

Dramatic Feature Films

- ◆ ***Girl On The Train*** - Larry Brand thriller featuring Henry Ian Cusick, Stephen Lang, Nicki Aycox.
- ◆ ***Lifelines*** - Dysfunctional family drama featuring Jane Adams, Joe Morton, Dreama Walker.
- ◆ ***Fight Night*** - Documentary-style feature drama set in the world of illegal underage fight clubs.
- ◆ ***Mass of Angels*** - Jim Riffel's highly structured and stylized drama paralleling a woman's life in a mental hospital with her presence in a bizarrely alternate reality, which may or may not be in her mind.
- ◆ ***Black Eyed Susan*** - Another offbeat noirish drama from Jim Riffel, shot primarily in black & white.
- ◆ ***The Basement*** - Family drama based on the play of the same name, directed by Larry Brand.
- ◆ ***Crimson Lights*** - Relationship drama with religious overtones.
- ◆ ***Mom*** - Horror film allegory about aging, in which a little old lady turns into a flesh eating ghoul, as shown from the point of view of her middle-aged son who thinks it's just a phase she's going through.
- ◆ ***Overexposed*** - Catherine Oxenberg as a soap opera star being stalked in this Larry Brand thriller.
- ◆ ***Cool Blue*** - Hank Azaria and Woody Harrelson in a relationship comedy, with a cameo by Sean Penn.
- ◆ ***Andy and the Airwave Rangers*** - Fantasy ulti-matte adventure about children kidnapped into a television reality, filmed primarily using hand-drawn virtual sets, mixing both 35mm film and video.
- ◆ ***The Drifter*** - Kim Delaney as a woman being stalked after a one-night stand in this noirish thriller from director Larry Brand, also featuring Miles O'Keefe and Tim Bottoms.
- ◆ ***Revenge of the Stolen Stars*** - Action-adventure film from Ulli Lommel, shot in the US and Mexico, featuring Suzanna Love and Klaus Kinski.
- ◆ ***The Toy Gun*** - Taiwanese-American drama from director Shien-Yuin Pei..
- ◆ ***Olivia*** - Murder thriller from Ulli Lommel featuring Suzanna Love and Robert Walker, Jr.
- ◆ ***The Bogeyman*** - Horror classic (and sequel ***Bogeyman 2***) directed by Ulli Lommel.
- ◆ ***Street Trash*** - Cult film / midnight movie favorite about a bunch of winos who live in a junk yard, their ranks slowly decimated by a bad batch of wine which causes them to melt in gory technicolor.
- ◆ ***Forest of Fear*** - Zombie horror film, later re-released as ***Toxic Zombies***
- ◆ ***Reaching Out*** - Family relationship drama about parental loss, featuring Betty White.

Music Films

- ◆ ***Feature Length Music Documentaries by Robert Mugge*** - Over the last 25 years I've collaborated as concert and/or documentary cameraman with noted music filmmaker Robert Mugge on many projects:
 - ***Deep Sea Blues*** -- A week with the Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise in the Caribbean.
 - ***New Orleans Music In Exile*** -- Starz documentary showing the effects of Hurricane Katrina on the New Orleans music community, featuring both performance footage and a first hand look at the devastation to the city.
 - ***Last of the Mississippi Jukes*** - Morgan Freeman is featured in Starz concert film shot primarily at Jackson, Mississippi's Subway Lounge and Clarksdale, Mississippi's Ground Zero Blues Club.
 - ***Rhythm 'n' Bayous: A Road Map to Louisiana Music*** - Exploration of the full variety of music found in Louisiana, including swamp pop, blues, Cajun, zydeco, and more.
 - ***Hellhounds On My Trail: The Afterlife of Robert Johnson*** - Centered around a Cleveland tribute held by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, this film also travels south to trace the roots of his legend.
 - ***True Believers: The Musical Family of Rounder Records*** - Wide range of performers on label.
 - ***The Kingdom of Zydeco*** - Concert film dealing with this Louisiana - based style of music.
 - ***Gather at the River: A Bluegrass Celebration*** - At Owensboro, KY *World of Bluegrass* festival.
 - ***Pride and Joy: The Story of Alligator Records*** - 20th anniversary tour of blues label performers.
 - ***Kumu Hula: Keepers of a Culture*** - The Hawaiian music and dance tradition of Hula is explored.
 - ***Saxophone Colossus*** - Portrait of jazz great Sonny Rollins.
 - ***The Return of Reuben Blades*** - Portrait of the actor, lawyer and salsa artist.
 - ***Gospel According To Al Greene*** - Portrait of soul singer and gospel preacher Al Green
 - ***Cool Runnings: The Reggae Movie*** -- Concert film shot at Reggae Sunsplash

- ◆ *An Evening With Kimiko Itoh* - 90 minute concert special for Video Arts Japan.
- ◆ *A Day in the Garden* - Concert film of multi-day festival celebrating anniversary of Woodstock.
- ◆ *Ricky Lynn Gregg* - DP for hour-long documentary on rising country-western singer.
- ◆ *Cornell Dupree: Live at the Lone Star* - One hour concert special for Japan Satellite Broadcast.
- ◆ *Music Videos, Promos & Shorts* - Scary Chicken, Too Much Joy, Run-DMC, The 6's, Dana Dane, PIL, Georgia Satellites, Happy Mondays, America, Plasmatics, Lou Reed, Jim Riffel, Rob Bass, Kiss, Terri Lynn Carrington, Pupo, Gregori Hunte, Luciano Pavarotti.
- ◆ *The Fixx's Christmas Special* - MTV concert special.
- ◆ *Richie Havens* - DP for hour-long concert special.
- ◆ *Stand Or Fall* - Rockumentary about British music group The Fixx.

Documentaries

- ◆ *Deli Man* - Feature doc parallels a century of change in deli business with Jewish culture in America.
- ◆ *To Save a Life* - Documentary about a group of 50 Kinder Transport survivors brought from Vienna to the US just before WWII by a couple from Philadelphia (HBO).
- ◆ *Billy Strayhorn: A Lush Life* - PBS biography of Duke Ellington's musical collaborator, winner of Emmy and Writers Guild awards for Best Documentary as well as a Peabody Award..
- ◆ *David Mitzner: Journey of Miracles* - Tracing his life story from a childhood in prewar Warsaw, surviving the Holocaust in a Russian gulag, and eventually becoming the 'Donald Trump of Poland'
- ◆ *Klezmatic: On Holy Ground* - Feature length film about the world's best known Klezmer band.
- ◆ *Source of Hope* - Documentary on attempt to eradicate river blindness, filmed in West Africa.
- ◆ *Why We Fight* - Additional interview camerawork for this film about the military-industrial complex.
- ◆ *A Reason for Joy* - Successes in the treatment of HIV-infected orphans in Romania.
- ◆ *Gordon Parks: Life Decisions* - Biography of famous photographer / filmmaker / artist.
- ◆ *Born in the USA* - Analysis of childbirth and the health care system.
- ◆ *Saving Sheba* - Documentary on alternative medical treatments.
- ◆ *Meeting the Beautiful People* - Jim Riffel's feature length anecdotal documentary about fame.
- ◆ *A.J. Foyt* - Home video biography of car racing great.
- ◆ *Gold of the RMS Republic* - A month in the North Atlantic documenting this shipwreck treasure hunt.
- ◆ *Parenting* - Documentary about alternative methods of childbirth.
- ◆ *Cycles* - World Championship bicycle racing documentary.
- ◆ *Prisoners* - Documentary about health care and the elderly.

Other Camerawork

- ◆ **Reality Shows** - *America's Best Dance Crew, Big Sexy, So You Think You Can Dance, Little People: Big Love, Unusual Suspects, Dance Wars, America's Worst Driver*
- ◆ **Entertainment** - *Entertainment Tonight, Insider, Hard Copy, Extra, E! Entertainment, Inside Edition*
- ◆ **Sports Television** - *NBA Entertainment, Major League Baseball Productions, AVP*
- ◆ **Commercials** - A variety of national Commercials, PSA's and Promos.
- ◆ **Broadway Press Reels** - For numerous Broadway and Off-Broadway plays and musicals.
- ◆ **Fashion** - Runway shows and behind the scenes shooting including *New York Fashion Week* (twice a year for the past 15 years) for major companies such as *Ralph Lauren* and *Victoria's Secret*.
- ◆ **Foreign Television** - Documentary, magazine format, and feature segments for *RAI* and *BBC*.
- ◆ **Home Videos** - *Step 360, Insane Workout Video, Baseball Time Capsule* (w/ Mickey Mantle & Billy Martin), *Soap Stars Fitness Workout, Get Rich Quick, Psycho-Calisthenics with Lindsay Wagner*.
- ◆ **Corporate / Industrial Projects and Web Productions**- For more than 50 major companies. Recent clients include *Mastercard, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Merck, Citibank, Ernst & Young, the US Army, Cingular, Kraft* and *General Electric*.

Work Experience in Other Areas of Film & Video Production

Directing

- ◆ *An Evening with Kimiko Itoh* - 90 minute multi-camera jazz performance special.
- ◆ *Cornell Dupree: Live at the Lone Star* - One hour multi-camera music special.
- ◆ *Sony Walkman: Twentieth Anniversary* - Live two hour event at Roseland, utilizing five video cameras, multiple roll-in sources, video projection screens, live dance routines, and speaker support for presenters. Included direction and editing supervision for all roll-ins and computer animation modules.
- ◆ *Corporate/ Industrial Films & Videos* - Assorted marketing and training videos for corporate clients including *IBM, Savin, Boehringer, Best Foods, Camel, Siemens, Astra-Zeneca*.
- ◆ *Transitional Elements & Bumper Shots* - Director/cameraman for scenic/ b-roll/ transitional shots used by television shows or films. (*Entertainment Tonight, Insider, Wasteland, Linguini Incident*)

Sound Recording

- ◆ *Greatest Sports Legends* - Three seasons of location audio for sports documentary tv series.
- ◆ *Maya* - Feature dramatic film set at Fashion High School in New York City.
- ◆ *The Redeemer* - Feature horror film set at the Staunton Military Academy in Virginia.
- ◆ *In Search Of...* - New York area location segments for Leonard Nimoy tv series.
- ◆ *The Other Guy* - Feature gangster film set in Philadelphia.
- ◆ *RAI - Italian Television* - Numerous documentary and magazine segments across the US.

Editing / Postproduction

- ◆ *It Came From Hollywood* - Designed hybrid film/ video edit system to accommodate hundreds of hours of source footage for this compilation film, and trained editorial staff in its operation.
- ◆ *No Nukes* - Supervising Music and Sound Editor for this rock & roll concert feature, included supervising overdubbing and 24/48 track music mixes with major artists, as well as 2 months of Dolby Surround mix supervision at Zoetrope (San Francisco) and Goldwyn (Los Angeles).
- ◆ *Damien* - Assistant sound editor for feature film.

Producing

- ◆ *Mass of Angels* - Associate Producer for feature film..
- ◆ *Corporate/ Industrial Films & Videos* - Producer, Line Producer or Production Manager for a variety of videos for corporate clients such as Continental Airlines, Samsung, Best Foods
- ◆ *Non-Credited Projects* - Though not formally credited, did budgeting, hiring crews, scheduling and otherwise line producing many of the productions I've shot. This was particularly true of the *Remember WENN* series, for which we had to create (and revise several times) a complete budgetary game plan to get AMC to give the go-ahead to produce their first original series.

Screenwriting

- ◆ *The Boogeyman* - Co-writer of classic horror film (also served as DP) Credited as '*David Herschel*'

Still Photography

- ◆ *Web Training Modules* - The reduced bandwidth specified by many corporate clients for their web training scenarios has mandated creating their modules from still photographs rather than video elements. These are often shot and lit much like videos, but using still cameras and photographing 3000 - 5000 frames a day, utilizing a combination of strobe and continuous lighting units.

Computer, Software & Consulting Services

OnSet Software: *Software needs analysis, design and programming for a series of production utilities used by numerous theatre companies, schools, television shows and feature films.*

History: In the early 1990's I wrote a series of spreadsheet templates (initially for use on productions I was shooting, later distributed primarily on a shareware basis) that automated typical production tasks such as budgets, daily film inventories and call sheets, as well as providing calculators for solar position, lens data, hmi shutter angles, film exposure and running time. A compiled version was released in 1993 with modest success as the *OnSet Utilities*.

In 1998 I began to transition into database development, creating simple media asset databases for several production companies. At that time my wife Rita was running the theatre department for a private school, and I developed a small database to simplify and manage all the lists for her theatrical productions. Some theatre professionals saw it and encouraged us to make it commercially available. After more than a thousand hours of upgrading the program and writing a help system and manual, we launched the *onsetsoftware.com* website in 2000 with *PRS* as our flagship product.

Currently Available Software Programs: *(Products are sold through catalogs such as Samuel French and Baker's Plays, as well as in bookstores and directly over the web at www.onsetsoftware.com)*

- ◆ **PRS: Play Rehearsal Scheduler** - PRS began as a simple scheduling utility for theatrical productions, but has grown to become a full-production database resource. Used by hundreds of schools and theatre companies on five continents, it remains our most popular product and is currently in its third version.
- ◆ **Castology** - For casting agents, film, video and theatre production companies. Manages and runs casting sessions while building a performers database and tracking offers extended to performers..
- ◆ **M3s** - Manages cast, crew and scheduling for multiple production units on the same film, tracks assets such as props and wardrobe, and allows input of scene and take continuity notes. Fully networkable, it provides a smooth data link amongst departments and to the edit room.
- ◆ **CTL: Company Tape Library** - Manages tape and asset libraries for small and mid-sized companies, allowing simultaneous searches by twenty users.

Custom Designed / Contract Projects --

- ◆ **Mitzner Media Archive** - Combination database and high definition media player providing key and subject searchable access to more than 40 hours of HD footage as well as photos and documents.
- ◆ **The Awful Truth: Postproduction Supervision Software** - Postproduction tracking and management system created for the Michael Moore tv series.
- ◆ **Pepsi Challenge** - Statistics & tracking database created for *Pepsi Challenge* commercial filming.
- ◆ **Budget Forms and Call Sheet Spreadsheets** - Budget and call sheet spreadsheet templates created and customized for several production companies based on their needs and specifications.

Computer Work for Motion Pictures --

- ◆ **Paranoia** --- 3-D Computer sequences for feature motion picture. --- (1996)
 - Design and implementation of 3-D architectural model, animated walk-throughs and custom graphical interfaces used as visual elements in movie thriller.
- ◆ **Ecotopia** - Science Fiction Film - Preproduction Phase --- (1991-92)
 - DP and computer sequences co-supervisor for 150 computer 3-D generated background plates for front projection and blue screen compositing, representing more than 20 minutes of screen time.
 - Supervised work by fifteen 2-D and 3-D computer artists, developed virtual "lighting grid" to emulate principal photography lighting designs, including animated elements and interactive lighting cues for selected scenes, and designed a database to manage the project.

Technology Writing

The Perfect Vision Magazine - New Technologies Reviewer -- (1993-94)

- Contributing writer to TPV - a high end laser disk hardware and software oriented magazine - covering new products and technologies from the fringes of the beaten path.
 - ◆ *Virtual Vision* - Review of personal TV goggle viewing system, including an on-set demo tryout with Andrez Wajda and Terrence Malick..
 - ◆ *Crystal Eyes* - Review of early computer-based 3-D television viewing system.
 - ◆ *Ron Fricke* - Interview with *Baraka* and *Chronos* filmmaker and 70mm camera designer.

Instruction Manuals - User guides and tutorials for the various *OnSet Software* computer programs.

Teaching and Guest Lecturing

- *Guest Lecturer/ Workshop Leader* -- For film and video production and cinematography classes at both undergraduate and graduate levels at several colleges and universities, including, *School of Visual Arts, New York University, Ball State* and *Columbia University*, speaking and leading hands-on sessions in cinematography, lighting design and the use of software and other new technologies in film making.
- *Teaching* -- Adjunct teaching at technical schools:
 - ◆ *Digital Film Academy, NYC* - Cinematography instructor for several terms of accelerated program.
 - ◆ *Gibbs School, NYC* - Two years of Video Production and/or Cinematography classes in video production program.

Education

- *MFA* -- 1974 -- NYU Graduate Institute of Film and Television (1972-74) (*Film making*)
- *BS* -- 1972 -- University of Maryland, College Park (1970-72) (*Physics & Astronomy*)
- *Other Schools Attended* -- Bowdoin College (1968-1970)
 - Corcoran School of Art (Summer 1970) (*Photography*)
- *Additional Training* -- Sony ICE Team training sessions in new cameras, formats & technologies
 - Union-sponsored education sessions in lighting design and camera operation.

Awards

- *Cable Ace Award for Series Cinematography* -- *Remember WENN* (American Movie Classics)
- *Emmy Nomination for Series Cinematography* -- *Mathnet* (PBS)
- *Telly Award for Cinematography* -- *Elle Deco: Behind the Design* (Discovery Networks)
- *Film Festival Awards for Cinematography and/or Best Film* -- *Mass of Angels, Black-Eyed Susan*
- In addition, programs which I DP'd have garnered numerous accolades, including multiple Emmy's, a Peabody, DGA Best Director, WGA Best Documentary, Cine Eagle, and many film festival "Best's."

Association Memberships

- *Academy of Television Arts & Sciences* -- Member and *Emmy Awards* voter
- *IATSE Local 600* - Director of Photography (since 1990)