



Login Box

User Name:

Password:

Remember:

[Register](#) | [Forgot](#)



Sponsored links

New SHOOTonline website Suggestion Box.... You're invited – actually encouraged – to suggest ideas, recommendations and vote on others ideas here.

CURRENT SHOOT PRINT ISSUE PDF AVAILABLE FOR FREE DOWNLOAD Read, View Work, & Download the Digital PDF version of SHOOT. **EVERYONE HAS A STORY... "SPW IT" IN YOUR OWN WORDS!** SPW is a powerful low-cost PR tool reaching film, entertainment, commercial & TV content creators. And, of course, journalists, bloggers & news aggregators. The SHOOT Publicity Wire.... **TRY IT YOU'LL LOVE IT...** Join the growing list of happy clients. NOW is the ideal time to try it - get your story out there! Follow SHOOTonline & The SHOOT Publicity Wire on Twitter: Follow SHOOT & you'll get all site updates (SHOOT Tweets) on your homepage, your phone, or any application (like Tweetie, Twitterberry, etc.) you use.

SHOOT NEW DIRECTORS SHOWCASE 2011 WEB REEL NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE Check out the "Class of 2011"... View. Share. Comment.



News :: A High "Five" For Public Service Television Programming

News and Articles may be viewed by non-paid users for seven days prior to being archived. **To view ScreenWork posted within the last 15 days you must be a Registered User.** If you're not registered, [register](#) now. **Full access to the News & Articles archives and ScreenWork archives is restricted to paid subscribers only.** Subscription plans range from only \$9.99 a month to \$89.99 for a full year. Click [subscribe](#) to upgrade to a paid subscription now and gain full access to SHOOTonline.com.

If you are already a paid subscriber, you may [login](#).

A High "Five" For Public Service Television Programming

Type: News
Category: News
Options:

Cinematographers Reflect On Their Segments Of Film Anthology Chronicling How Breast Cancer Impacts Lives For Sony Pictures TV/Lifetime



DP Christopher Popp (l) and director Penelope Spheeris

LOS ANGELES, September 09, 2011, Robert Goldrich --- On Oct. 10, the film *Five* will premiere on Lifetime as part of its programming to commemorate and further the purpose of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Much star power has been brought to bear in the creation and making of *Five*, which chronicles the powerful impact of breast cancer on the lives of those diagnosed with the disease, as well as on their families and friends.

Five is a film anthology consisting of five shorts, each telling a separate yet connected story, the respective directors being Jennifer Aniston, Demi Moore, Alicia Keys, Patty Jenkins and Penelope Spheeris. Aniston and Moore are best known for their acting careers and Keys for her music while Jenkins (*Monster*, and this year nominated for best director of a drama series for the pilot episode of *The Killing*) and Spheeris (*Wayne's World*, *The Decline of Western Civilization*) are accomplished directors. Aniston is executive producing *Five* with Marta Kauffman (*Friends*), Paula Wagner (*Mission: Impossible*), Kristin Hahn (*The Departed*, *The Switch*), Kevin Chinoy (*Warren The Ape*, *Greg The Bunny*) and Francesca Silvestri (also *Warren The Ape*, *Greg The Bunny*) for Sony Pictures Television/Lifetime.

Also in the *Five* mix are several notable cinematographers, with Eric Edwards (*Knocked Up*, *The Break-Up*, *Cop Land*) lensing the Aniston directed *Mia* segment/short of *Five* (with Mia portrayed by Patricia Clarkson), Tami Reiker, ASC, shooting the Moore-helmed *Charlotte* (the title character played by Ginnifer Goodwin), Jim Orr serving as DP on the Keys-directed *Lili* (portrayed by Rosario Dawson), Guy Livneh shooting the Jenkins-helmed *Pearl* (played by Jeanne Tripplehorn), and Christopher Popp lensing the Spheeris-directed *Cheyenne* (played by Lyndsy Fonseca).

SHOOT gained insights into *Five* from DPs Livneh, Orr, Popp and Reiker who provided backstory on how they landed the gig, the biggest creative challenges it presented, their working relationships with the directors, and the cameras and technology deployed.

Tami Reiker

Reiker shot the first segment of *Five*, which is *Charlotte*. "The story is set on July 20, 1969, between 5 and 7 p.m.; it is the day of the moon landing," said Reiker. In the first segment we meet Pearl, a seven-year-old girl, whose mother Charlotte is dying of breast cancer. Pearl is confused by all the activity in the house, no one has explained to her that her mother is dying, just that she has a "really bad cold."

Email:

We follow Pearl on her quest to get into to see her mother and give her a picture of the moon landing that she has drawn.

Pearl turns out to be the connection to the other stories in *Five*. She grows up and chooses a career to help those stricken with cancer; it is through her oncology clinic that we are introduced to some of the women in the other short films.

Reiker related, "I became involved in the project through Demi Moore. She saw my reel and had the producers contact me. When we first met, we both felt strongly that the story be told and shot from the girl's point of view--that Pearl would be the viewer's eyes, the camera would lead or follow her through her journey and anything the camera saw would be from her perspective. One of the biggest challenges was only having Pearl, the little girl, eight hours a day; a seven year old can only work an eight-hour day--that includes lunch and schooling. Pearl is in every scene and almost every shot. The first eight hours of the day we had to hit the ground running, with the AD always announcing 'two hours left on the little girl,' 'one hour left on the little girl,' 'ten minutes left on the little girl.' When her time was up, there was no negotiating, she was gone. After she was finished for the day, we could all breath again, we would pick up any shots that were from her POV. The little girl who played Pearl, Ava Akers, was amazing, the most poised and controlled seven year old I have ever met."

Regarding Moore, Reiker described her as being "a great collaborator, very passionate, and with a strong vision of what she wanted the piece to look and feel like. For a cinematographer, this is heaven."

As for technology, Reiker noted that ARRI's Alexa was chosen for *Charlotte*. "The show was set to use the RED for all the segments, but Demi and I felt strongly since ours was a period piece that we wanted the subtle tones and greater latitude from the Alexa," explained Reiker. "Luckily my assistant John Connor owns two Alexa cameras and we were able to make a deal for our segment. We used the Cooke S4 primes. The camera movement was a combination of Steadicam and dolly moves. Demi and I really wanted to let some scenes play out in single takes. We did very little conventional coverage."

Reiker won an ASC Award in 2004 for the HBO pilot episode of *Carnivale*. She also garnered an Independent Spirit Award in '99 for Best Cinematography on the strength of the feature *High Art*. Her career spans features, TV and commercials; she is repped by *Dattner Disposito and Associates*. Underscoring how her spot and long-form careers are intertwined, Reiker early on in her career shot spec work in New York for an agency creative who had directorial aspirations, Craig Gillespie. In ensuing years she shot numerous real-world commercials for director Gillespie of MJZ, as well as his feature filmmaking debut, New Line Cinema's *Mr. Woodcock* which starred Billy Bob Thornton and Susan Sarandon.

Christopher Popp

Popp lensed the Spheeris-directed *Cheyenne* short in which the title character, a young stripper, is diagnosed with cancer and undergoes a double mastectomy. She and her husband Tommy cope and try to redefine their relationship.

"We decided on a very simple approach with the camera and to let the powerful story, the characters and the acting stand in the foreground," said Popp. "We also wanted to make them a likable couple. He works in 'outreach' for a 'local banker,' meaning he 'reaches' out when people don't pay..., and she is a stripper. A lot of people have preconceived ideas about this, but cancer doesn't discriminate. It doesn't care whether you are a stripper or not. It is cancer and it kills."

As for how he wound up landing the *Five* assignment, Popp shared, "Penelope Spheeris and I worked together for the first time on her last feature film *Balls To The Wall* (a comedy which opens to a limited release in October) where I replaced a DP five days into principal photography and continued to shoot without any prep, which in this case usually fell on lunch breaks, the end of a shoot day or when I walked on the set for the first time, for another five weeks. We got along really well as we both share the same sensibilities and humor and wanted to work together again. We stayed in contact and when Penelope told me the story of *Five*, and asked if I'd be interested in working with her on it, it was a no brainer for me."

Five also struck a personal chord for Popp who explained, "In Germany, where I was born and grew up, we still had a conscription when I was younger, and after approval of a conscientious objection to the military service, you were able to choose civilian service in a hospital, retirement home or in a medical ambulance organization which is what I did. I received training as a paramedic, and one of the calls that we responded to was called in by a concerned husband who spoke to his 35-year-old wife on the phone who had suddenly felt sick, lost eyesight and became unconscious. When we arrived at their house, her pupils were unresponsive to light which combined with the other symptoms pointed to a serious brain issue. We rushed her to the hospital but it was unfortunately too late. She was pronounced dead shortly after our arrival. What happened was that she had undergone surgery and chemo therapy for breast cancer in the previous year, but the cancer had metastasized to her brain causing a brain aneurysm which burst at the moment she was on the phone with her husband, telling him that she didn't feel right. It was quite a shocking experience to see first hand what a devastating impact this disease had on someone in the prime of her life at age 35 and on this couple. It is a memory that really stuck with me.

Reading the story of *Cheyenne*, that centers on a young stripper and her husband and how they deal with the devastating news and their relationship, reminded me very much of this experience and what the couple must have gone through.

"Years after this experience, both my grandmothers in their late 70s were also diagnosed with breast cancer and had to undergo surgery and treatment where I saw again what breast cancer means and how it affects not only the person suffering from it but everyone around it," said Popp. "Having been given the opportunity to work on *Five*, helping raise awareness of this terrible disease truly has special meaning to me."

Lighting played a key role for Popp in doing justice to that meaning. "To visually convey the emotional arc that *Cheyenne* (Lyndsy Fonseca) and Tommy (Taylor Kinney) go through, how they and their lives change, the lighting and tone of the piece has an arc itself and changes over the course of the story. The beginning scenes in the club and at their home are rendered very warm with saturated colors to reflect the warmth and honesty of their relationship and that they are happy with where they are at this point in their lives. Then, after they detect the lump, it cuts to an exterior shot of the hospital. Stark, cold geometric lines of the architecture along with muted, neutral colors to reflect their powerlessness and that life as they know it has slipped out of their hands. The neutral look continues in the oncologist Pearl's office where they get the devastating news that she needs to undergo a double mastectomy. Although the office is seen in another segment of *Five*, it is lit for *Cheyenne's* emotional state she is in right now rather than continuity. She asks the doctor: 'But if you take away everything I am, who survives exactly?' Her and Tommy's side of the room is lit darker and more contrasty than Pearl's side, which is lighter in tone during this scene. Warmth from previous scenes, reflecting the warmth of their life and relationship before the diagnosis, is carried over into this environment by the use of warm practicals in which color was enhanced in the DI session.

"The colors," continued Popp, "change further from this neutral tone into a slightly blue-green in a scene where Tommy 'reaches out' with a baseball bat to Lenny (David Eigenberg), one of his usual customers who owes money, in a parking structure. Tommy is at his lowest point emotionally in this scene. He is really confused and doesn't know what to do and what to say to his wife. He is completely helpless and receives advice from the unlikeliest of people. To visually reflect his emotional state, the entire scene was shot handheld giving it a slightly 'unhinged' loose feeling. The scene is also top lit very soured with overhead fluorescents. The last scene of the story returns to a warmer tone again but not as saturated as the initial scenes of the piece. Tommy and *Cheyenne* have overcome huge obstacles and have found a way to deal with their changed lives in a new defined relationship which is reflected by the warmth returning and bookending the piece. This was one of the toughest scenes that we shot as Tommy opens *Cheyenne's* shirt and we see the mastectomy scars that Tommy kisses. The wider shot was done with Lyndsy wearing a chest prosthetic and the close ups were done with a woman who had actually undergone the surgery. I think that everyone on the set was deeply affected by this moment and realized that we had done something meaningful by telling this important story."

Popp noted that "shooting digital capture was pretty much stipulated by Sony. We carried two RED Ones upgraded with Mysterium-X chips and shot 16:9 4K. The lens package consisted of a full set of Cooke S4/i Primes ranging from 14mm-135mm and a 24mm-290mm Optimo (12:1) Zoom lens and Tiffen IR neutral-density filters for day exteriors and interiors.

"Coming from a film background, I try to accomplish as much as possible in the camera and on set and treat the DI as the icing on the cake," Popp explained. "Keeping the look and the visual arc I was after consistent throughout all stages of production was very important to me--especially when you work digitally where this can easily get lost in the workflow. Dan Zimbaldi, who was our DIT on *Cheyenne*, owns this great DIT package that is small, agile and can be occasionally battery powered if needed. The package consists of a Maxx Digital Mobile Rocket in conjunction with a laptop running RED Cine X to grade the shots and onset tests and output HDSDI to a color correct monitor and scope on the DIT cart. We called it our 'lab on set,' because it is literally with you on set. We used the new SSD drives instead of flash cards or hard drives which give you an advantage of enhanced speed and reliability while copying data and color grading shots to create LUTs. We easily shot tests on the fly and processed them immediately to set the look or make decisions in regard to diffusion, motion blur, lighting, wardrobe, production design, etc. We also recorded a 15 to 30 sec Rec 709 HDSDI sample of all the primary setups and some related color and greyscale charts. This combined with the metadata enables an easy interpretation for both creative editorial and final color timing which happened on a Baselight that supports direct interpretation of the RED code metadata. So when I walked into the timing suite at Sony ColorWorks and John Persichetti, the color timer, pulled up the *Cheyenne* segment with images that looked what we did on the set. I was very happy to say the least."

The camera crew on *Cheyenne* included A-camera operator Bonnie Blake, B-camera operator Brad Grimmett, A-camera 1st AC Ian Takahashi, 2nd AC Dawn Nakamura, B-camera 1st AC Justin Jung, 2nd AC Eric Jensch and DIT Zimbaldi.

Popp's first feature film as a DP was *Lakshya*, which earned him Best Cinematography honors at the

50th Annual Filmfare Awards (Bollywood's equivalent of the Oscar) as well as at the Global Indian Film Awards. He has worked in features, TV, shorts and documentaries and aspires to extend his reach into commercials. Popp is handled by the [Eastern Talent Agency](#) (formerly The Geller Agency).

Jim Orr

Jim Orr directed the Alicia Keys-directed *Lili*. "I think one of our biggest creative challenges to *Project Five* was to capture the humor as well as the seriousness of the story," reflected Orr. "Alicia wanted the actors to be able to deliver the dialogue fast and on top of each other like a normal family does. Alicia did not want to pin the actors down to absolute marks. She wanted them to have some freedom to move while speaking and be able to talk over each other at times. To accommodate this, we went with two cameras handheld in the tight spaces and did some free flowing of cameras on the actors. I operated the A camera and Marcis Cole operated the B camera. It was very tight spaces but our entire crew and ast all danced together and we retained the spontaneity of the scenes."

As for technical considerations, Orr observed, "Alicia wanted the gorgeous actors to be lit beautifully. Three of our locations had tons of mirrors or glass and marble walls which potentially reflected the crew and the lighting. But the locations were so perfect, Alicia wanted to shoot there and I agreed with her and felt we could do it with some tricky camera placements. There is a waiting room where many of the pivotal scenes take place with the entire family and several actors enter and exit to interact with them. We shot these scenes handheld with a free flowing style to retain the spontaneity of the actors. The trick was to not light the actors too much with unflattering top light. We ended up solving some of the lighting by utilizing conspicuously placed LED lights in places and on cameras from our gaffer, Michal Bauman, and floating bounce cards and bleached muslin on the floor from our key grip, Jerry Deats. We found out the day before we could not raise ceiling tiles in any practical locations in Los Angeles Center Studios and had to creatively adjust our lighting on the day.

"We shot a very touching scene in the bathroom," continued Orr, "when Lili (Rosario Dawson) is trying to escape her mother (Jennifer Lewis) and her sister Alyssa (Tracee Ellis Ross) comes into try to soothe her. The bathroom had parallel full length mirrors in a seven-foot wide sink area. We shot almost the entire scene with two cameras handheld in mirrors as the women talked to each others' reflections. As the scene progresses and they draw back together and finally turn to face each other, we shot them without the mirrors. Again, we were faced with not seeing ourselves or our lighting in the endless reflections the two parallel walls of mirrors posed."

Orr said he was "drawn to *Project Five* from the quality of the scripts and the people involved. The scripts are each beautifully written and stand alone as lovely stories. But together they form a truly touching and amazing story of the people who deal with breast cancer and their friends and families along with them. Jennifer Aniston and Marta Kaufmann brought an amazing group of people to this project and I felt honored to be a part of it."

Regarding how he got the opportunity to lens a *Five* short, Orr explained, "I had worked with executive producers Kevin Chinoy and Francesca Silvestri on the *Glamour Reel Project* which Jessica Biel directed. That film was a success and they thought I would be a good match with Alicia who did not yet have a cinematographer. They spoke very highly of me to Alicia and she decided to go with me."

Orr deployed the RED One with the MX sensor for Lili. "I used 1/4 Black Pro Mist filters and always tried to key at a T2.8/4 split," said Orr. "We shot with Cooke S4 lenses and also used the Optimo zoom if we had the chance."

Also when he gets the chance, Orr shoots commercials among the films, TV shows and music videos he takes on. As for how he lands spotmaking gigs, he related, "I usually get recommended by producers or directors to the agencies."

Guy Livneh

The closing short to *Five* is *Pearl*, directed by Jenkins and shot by Livneh. The DP has enjoyed an ongoing collaborative relationship with Jenkins whose *Monster* garnered a Best Actress in a Leading Role Oscar for Charlize Theron in 2004.

"Patty Jenkins and I first collaborated on short films at AFI," recalled Livneh. "When Patty started working on *Monster*, she invited me to shoot the opening sequence with her and stay on as second unit director/DP. When Patty told me about *Project Five*, I was in."

Livneh described Jenkins as being "a very thorough director. As part of her preparation she does serious research which helps me really understand the subject, in this case a deadly disease. She makes very detailed plans and at the same time is always open to new ideas on set. Through mutual respect and trust we combine our creative energy and create memorable images."

Livneh shared that his biggest creative challenge on *Five* "was seeing beyond the disease and in a short period of time to create a strong connection with the characters without being overbearing. As a cinematographer my goal is to care for the characters and in *Pearl* it had a deeper meaning. *Pearl* needed our care and support to see her through her battle with cancer [the oncologist is diagnosed as having the disease in this short]."

Pearl was lensed with two RED-MX cameras provided by Alternative Rentals. Livneh shot 4K raw 16X9.

"One of our visual 'rules,'" said Livneh, "was to physically keep a distance between the camera and the characters, always looking for foreground elements to obstruct the view. Part of this led us to choose long lenses. We knew there would be no handheld or Steadicam shots which allowed us to shoot the project on the heavier Angenieux Optimo Zooms, specifically the 24-290 and 17-80. I generally prefer prime lenses--however, after testing, Patty and I both liked the look and feel of these zooms for this particular project. A side benefit of shooting on zooms is the ability to make fast adjustments for very precise compositions.

"Technically the biggest challenge was a 'one shot' in the opening sequence that required panning on a long lens between multiple women who have breast cancer as they are moving through a city square. It required perfect coordination between actors, background action and the camera. It was shot on a 24-290 zoom with an extender, meaning that there was literally no margin for error. The end result was a combination of three takes with foreground elements used to hide the transitions."

Here's the trailer for *Five*:

Copyright © 2011, DCA Business Media LLC. All rights reserved.

All text, photos, graphics, artwork, and other material on the SHOOTonline.com site are copyrighted. All copying or reproduction, especially for commercial publicity use or resale in any manner, form, or medium, requires explicit, prior, permission from the publisher. If you have any questions regarding copyright or use of the materials on this site, are interested in article linking, pdf creation, or any form of article re-distribution contact permissions@shootonline.com, we will try to address your needs and concerns. SHOOTonline.com may, in appropriate circumstances and at its discretion, terminate the accounts of users who infringe the intellectual property rights of others.

Search News and Archives

Search:

Filter by type: Filter by category:

News posted between: and: or [browse by category](#)



JOSEPH FINN CO., INC.
AUCTIONEERS • APPRAISERS
FAX 617-964-7827 Mass. License #216
188 Needham St., Newton, MA 02464 • 617-964-1886
www.josephfinn.com



We're 50 years old & you're not a fan yet?
Be a SHOOT fan :)
Post your thoughts, pics, work, comments

Shootonline.com: The Website for Commercial, Interactive & Branded Content Production

[ABOUT US](#) | [ADVERTISE](#) | [COMMENTS](#) | [SHOOT FORUM](#) | [RSS](#) [XML](#) | [FAQs](#) | [LEGAL](#) | [REPRINTS](#) | [E-NEWSPAPERS](#) | [SUBSCRIBE](#)

© 1990 - 2011 DCA Business Media LLC All rights reserved.