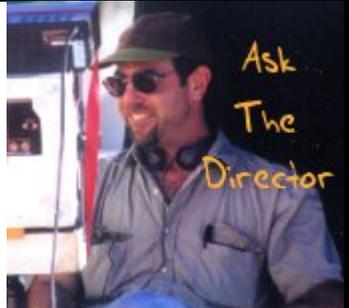


# Josh Becker DGA

## Directing From The Edge



Q & A Archive  
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Name: Stan Comet  
E-mail: [Scomet9750@aol.com](mailto:Scomet9750@aol.com)

Dear Mr. Becker:

I write as the editor of a site with an absurd name, but serious content. Its called Jewhoo! (at Jewhoo.com). The purpose of the site is to provide capsule biographies on famous Jewish persons in a variety of fields. Entertainment figures are, of course, among the most popular. We now have the largest list of Jewish actors/actresses ever compiled and it is very accurate. Mistakes are impossible to avoid since sources, etc. sometimes differ.

What you say in your essay is quite accurate in general. However, no serious modern biographer of Chaplin has found that he was Jewish. I invite you to check any number of biographies. There is a chance his half brother was half Jewish. I have not seen any relatively recent film article on Chaplin, other than your own, that maintains that he was Jewish.

Danny Thomas is ludicrous. He was a devout Christian. Born of Arab immigrants from Lebanon. Christian Arabs--thats how he got the last name Jacobs.

Larry Parks is listed as Jewish in some books of famous Jews in this or that. These books sometimes have errors. He was born Samuel Klausman. A fairly Jewish name. Without getting into stereotypes--his political views make it a bit more likely that he is Jewish (I am reading tea leaves clues). I will, however, concede that I have not seen a full biographical piece that mentions his faith one way or the other. Therefore, I reserve judgement.

I have to believe that these errors have been called to your attention before. When I make a mistake on my site, I post a correction. I invite you to do the same. Thank you.

Stan Comet (real name; Ellis Island story)  
Editor  
Jewhoo

By the way, Ben Kingsley has some Jewish ancestry on his mother's side. It is still unclear whether his mother was "fully" or partially Jewish. Therefore, his casting was not so jarring as you maintain. Besides, he did a great job. (Unlike some of the non-Jewish actors in Levinson films whose body language and other nuances seemed not quite right).

Dear Stan:

Thanks for the corrections. It's actually been quite a long time since I wrote that essay, perhaps eight or nine years. Anyway, I will revise it with your comments in mind.

Josh

[My buddy tracked down a quote from Charlie Chaplin in Colleen Moore's autobiography, "Silent Star," wherein Chaplin states to her and the top executives from First National Pictures, "I am a Jew." I think that is sufficient proof for my claim.]

Name: ALAN  
E-mail: picquickstudio@aol.com

Dear Josh:

I notice you include SPARTACUS amongst your favorite movies. I was wondering if you had seen GLADIATOR yet and if so how does it compare? Because of its success and Hollywood being Hollywood we can expect a spate of similar themed movies and TV shows in the next couple of years.

Dear Alan:

I haven't seen it yet, but I will. I think stories about ancient Rome are great because A.) It's a fascinating time period, and B.) You can't have automatic weapons or car chases. As opposed to recycling old movies, as I hear "Gladiator" is, there are a million cool, true stories if anyone ever bothered to read a book. Any 100-page section of Colleen McCullough's "First Man in Rome" series would make a great film.

Josh

Name: Rhonda  
E-mail: nahnah28@yahoo.com

Dear Josh,

I think your adorable, and smart. Your knowledge of films is amazing. How in the world do you know so much? I like the fact that you say what you think, and you don't care what anyone else says. I admire that. Honesty is very rare. Especially in Hollywood.

So keep up the good work! I just thought I'd write that, to give you a boost. You are one of my favorite directors, because of your honesty! And your talent. You give hope to those of us who don't have a college education. That you don't need a piece of paper to be intelligent!

All right done with that, I know it was stupid to tell you how much I admire you. But you should know not all of us dislike you.

Thanks for listening!

Sincerely,  
Rhonda

Dear Rhonda:

Thank you very much, I appreciate it.

Josh

Name: pATOCKY

E-mail:

Josh,

What kind of film do you have in mind to do on your next indie venture?

All the best,  
pATOCKy

Dear pATOCKy:

The script is ready to go. It's called "Devil Dogs: The Battle of Belleau Wood," which is a true story about the first battle the Americans were involved in during World War One.

Josh

Name: pATOCKY

E-mail:

Josh,

Are you still going to teach at UCLA?

All the best,  
pATOCKy

Dear pATOCKy:

No, not this year. I will at some point, though.

Josh

Name: August

E-mail: joxerfan@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

I did think of you when I saw that Steve Reeves had passed away, because a "Hercules vs. Atlas" story

would really have been a nice tribute to that whole muscleman genre.

But that's not actually what I'm writing to you about. I was wondering what you thought of the work and career of James Cagney? To me, he seemed to be tremendously talented, but he usually got stuck playing the same role over and over again. Within his body of work, though, the tough young guy of "Public Enemy," the likeable rogue of "Angels With Dirty Faces," the old pro criminal of "White Heat" and the little wannabe tough guy of "Love Me or Leave Me" displayed a lot of subtle differences of characterization. Plus, whenever he got a part with some substance to it, like the Captain in "Mr. Roberts" or the Berlin exec in "One Two Three," he really did superb work. Any opinions? (I'm asking you because you're the only person I can imagine who has seen any of those films!)

Thanks,

August

Dear August:

I guess I must have mentioned my "Hercules Vs. Atlas" story I wrote for the show that never got made. Steve Reeves would have been perfect for the old, crazy Atlas. As for James Cagney, he's the greatest! He was my first big movie star hero. I'm pretty sure I've seen all of his movies, including all those cheapo gangster films he did for Warners in the early 30s. Cagney, Robinson and Bogart are the most underrated actors in movie history. I know Cagney's entire big speech from "Mr. Roberts," (and here it is): "Mr. Roberts, do you see this cap? This the cap of a full commander, and I'm gonna wear it someday, and you're gonna help me. Now don't let this go to your head, but when Admiral Finchley gave me that award, he said, 'You've got a cargo officer, Morton, keep him at it, you're going places.' So I went out and I bought that cap. There ain't nothin' gonna stand between me and that cap! Certainly not you!" Etc. I can keep going, but I'll stop. I saw Cagney picture not too lang ago that I'd never seen, "Shake Hands With the Devil," shot on location in Ireland and it's very good. Another good one that nobody discusses is Cagney's other musical, "Something to Sing About," which I thought was pretty cool.

Josh

Name: ALAN

E-mail: picquickstudio@aol.com

Dear Josh,

I see that Douglas Fairbanks Jnr.has just died and was reminded how great the 1937 Selznick version of THE PRISONER OF ZENDA was.How did you rate this movie? The second season of HTLJ featured an excellent pastiche of it called "KING FOR A DAY" which was one of Michael Hurst's finest hours.

Dear Alan:

That's the best version of that story, the 1937 version with Ronald Coleman and the late, great Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., who was particularly good in that film. He's wonderful in "Gunga Din" too. I saw "King For a Day" and also thought Michael Hurst did a swell job. I must say in all honesty, though, that Lucy Lawless is every bit as good in my doubles episode, "Warrior . . . Princess . . . Tramp," which was in fact triples.

Josh

Name: Shirley  
E-mail: shirley@beckerfilms.com

Dear Josh:

Do you know what ever happened with the movie "Return From the River Kwai?" One of my friends bought a poster of it at a convention for George Takei to sign (the poster art features his character). George's face lit right up and he talked to us about it for at least 5 minutes, about how the the movie hadn't been released because the people who own "Bridge on the River Kwai" claim ownership of the term "River Kwai."

By the way, speaking of River Kwai, your latest "[Need for Structure, Part 6](#)" is a good one, although I must except myself from your statement that all human beings are ironic. <g>

Shirley

Dear Shirley:

I've never heard of it and it's not in my books. I feel ashamed and small. I think it's ironic that you don't think that you are ironic.

Josh

Name: stuart devenie (croque)  
E-mail: playfair@igrin.nz.co

Dear Josh,

I've just gone online for the first time and stumbled on your rather wonderful website. Hope all is going well for you. "Jack" finished filming a couple of weeks ago. What a lot of fun it was! Hope to see you downunder again soon.

regards,

Stuart

Dear Stuart:

It was a complete pleasure working with you and I hope I get the chance to do it again.

Josh

Name: Steve Block  
E-mail: parryisle2@webtv.net

Dear Josh:

Unfortunately I only saw the last twenty minutes of The Three Stooges movie. I had seen them in person in 1938 at the Brooklyn Strand. I always thought Curley was the glue that held the act together and when he died it never really recovered completely. The were guests on an Ed Sullivan Show. I do not remember who was the Third Stooge at the time. But the act was a disappointment when using a worn out overused

vaudeville skit "Niagra Falls, step by step..." Did the movie mention the disdain they had for Ronald Reagan? The last Stooge I saw in an interview, Larry Fine, complained that when Reagan was president of the Screen Actor's Guild he failed to get residuals for actors on the bottom of the totem pole. Fine said those in the position of the Stooges did not have enough clout to demand proper residual compensation when TV came on the scene and the actors were essentially competing against themselves. Fine said it was up to Reagan as head of their union to get management to put this in all contracts since he already had done it in is own. I was shocked to read and hear that the Stooges never made more that \$20,000 a year with Columbia. I guess personal appearances and testimonials were their only real source of income at the time.

Dear Steve:

In 1938 the 3rd stooge would have been Curly. I happen to be fond of both Shemp and Joe Besser, too (I couldn't stand Joe DeRita).

Josh

Name: anonymous insider  
E-mail: charmedlife@usa.net

Dear Josh:

Do you ever stop to wonder if your piss-poor, holier-than-thou attitude towards other films and filmmakers had anything at all to do with why you're not directing more films?

Dear Anonymous Insider:

I'd say you're probably correct. My "piss-poor, holier-than-thou attitude" has taken me many years to develop and completely gets in the way of ass-kissing, which is the main pastime in Hollywood and how most movies get made.

Josh

Name: Steve Block  
E-mail: parryisle2@webtv.net

Dear Josh:

Your comments on Jews in Hollywood is interesting but lacks a great deal. This is not your fault as the subject is much to broad and complex to be covered in a short article. Maybe the real problem is assimilation which one Rabbi recently said has destroyed more Jews than did the Holocaust. I found this confusing wondering if he wanted to return to the days of The Pale in Russia or the Ghettos in much of Europe. I think many actors simply want to blend in with the rest of the people in the nation. Many Jewish actors were so thoroughly assimilated that when I discovered they were Jews I was surprised. Looking at the cemetary sites on the Net tell us "Fugitive" David Jansson was Jewish as was the unfortunated decapitated Morrow. Tony Curtis played Selznick and had some harsh words for Adolf Zukor who had destroyed his father in the industry. Omar Shariff played Nick Arnstein and in another flick played a Jew fighting in North Africa while George Siegel played an Arab. America, the melting pot. Well sort of anyway. I never could figure out the casing of Charlie Chan always played by a caucasian with a Chinese son always played by a chinese. I remember when black actor, Canada Lee, put on white makeup to play a caucasian on Broadway which did

not go too well. But Jolson and Cantor often used blackface and somehow did not think this offensive. Cantor had a humanitarian profile so this was really contradictory. But it now seems less important to disclose your background and maybe that will be even more prevalent in the future in all areas of business.

Dear Steve:

Interesting letter, although I'm not sure what your point is? I had no idea, however, that David Janssen (real name, David Meyer) or Vic Morrow were Jewish. Regarding playing in blackface on stage, you can't judge history looking backward by today's standards. Playing in blackface was simply part of vaudeville, and always had been, and no one felt the slightest shame in doing so, nor did it make one a bigot. A story I always liked regarding David Selznick's dad, Lewis, who was one of the very early film distributors. Lewis Selznick was the original distributor for the Warner Bros. in the 1920s, and, apparently, was not returning as much money as the bros. Warner felt that they deserved. So Harry Warner, the oldest and most religious of the brothers, went over to Lewis Selznick's office in NYC and beat the shit out of him, thus ending their business relationship.

Josh

Name: ALAN.  
E-mail:

Dear Josh:

I just heard that Steve Reeves died today. This probably won't make the headlines to the extent it would if another, more critically "respectable" star of the 60's passed away but to many, myself included, this is tragic news indeed. He embodied a mythical hero of the past in such a way that he enriched the lives of those who saw and were thrilled by his performances when they were young so that in a way he was a hero himself. One day, a long time in the future I hope, someone will post a message like this about Kevin Sorbo. Thank you Josh for the part you have played in making these legends so enjoyable in their recent interpretations and perhaps we can say a little prayer for Steve.

Dear Alan:

Goodbye to Steve Reeves. Bit by bit the remnants of the old film industry disappear.

Josh

Name: Thom  
E-mail: RAMPAGE

Dear Josh:

What do you think of screenwriting software? Do you think it's worth buying? Or do you think a person is better off writing it their damn self.

Dear Thom:

I don't use it, nor can I see a good reason to start using it. A screenplay is made up of four tab stops: the beginning of dialog, the parenthesized emotion below the character's name, the character's name, and the transition over to the far right, meaning DISSOLVE or FADE OUT or CUT TO. As far as the software coming up with story ideas, if you think you need it for that purpose, I suggest going into another profession, any other profession.

Josh

Name: JOE DOLAN  
E-mail: JOEDOLANJR@HOTMAIL.COM

jOSH,

IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU GOT SCREWED. I HATE TO HEAR ABOUT THAT BECAUSE I WAS FOOLISH ENOUGH TO LET SOMEONE SEE A SCRIPT ONCE, (MY FIRST ONE), AND I KNEW NOTHING ABOUT REGISTERING OR THE FACT THAT YOU CAN GET RIPPED OFF, THEN I SAW LINDA CARTER IN A MADE FOR TV MOVIE BASED ON THE PLOT OF MY SCRIPT. I KNOW, EVERYONE HAS A SIMILAR PLOT IDEA, BUT THEY USED LINES WORD FOR WORD. NO JOKE. TO THIS DAY I STILL HAVEN'T SOLD A SCRIPT AND I TOO HAVE TRIED THE RULES THE WGA SAYS TO FOLLOW.

BU THE LOOKS OF YOUR SITE, IT SEEMS YOU ARE UP AND RUNNING FINE, CONGRATULATIONS, BUT I WANT TO KNOW ONE THING? HOW DOES THE WRITERS DREAM FEEL WHEN IT IS FINALLY ACCOMPLISHED? I KEEP TRYING, AND TIME KEEPS TICKING. I'D LOVE TO KNOW.

THANKS,

JOE DOLAN

Dear Joe:

I don't know what you are referring to when you say I got "screwed." Since I've never sold a script that's been produced, I haven't really experienced writing a script, then seeing it up on the screen. All of my scripts that have been produced, I did myself, and that's a completely different situation. BTW, I never register ANYTHING with the WGA, which is not a legal entity. The only real protection is too register with the copyright office in Washington, then state the copyright on the front page.

Josh

Name: John Forde  
E-mail: jforde40@hotmail.com

Josh,

I had the pleasure of spending a few hours w/ none other than Bruce Campbell himself yesterday. He was guest of honor at a student filmfest at Northwestern University. He did a hour and half Q&A session and then later gave a speech and handed out awards. I got to ask him about "Running Time" and what it was like to work w/ you. He promoted your website, gave you a few good natured ribbings, and spoke favorably about working w/ you. It was very cool to be getting straight talk from a very down to earth real person. I can see why you get satisfaction from working w/ him.

I hope all is well and that "Hammer" is moving along.

John Forde

Howdy, John:

Yeah, Bruce is OK, for an actor. Just don't eat with him. BTW, I just watched your 1934 production of "The Lost Patrol" again--excellent work!

Bravo!

Josh

Name: Jim

E-mail: Starion106@aol.com

Dear Josh:

Josh, how important do you think it is for a director to have an understanding of music? I would presume that most 'great' directors try to be experts in all the technical aspects of the medium. Now obviously an understanding of the visual aspect is a requirement, but its also important to have a good understanding of editing and, in general, ALL production aspects, from set design to casting. It seems to me that the music is often one of the last things to be considered in the filmmaking process. A composer, like Lo Duca, is brought in at the last minute to add/complement the tone of each scene. But wouldn't it be better, in a perfect world, if the director himself was also the composer? At best, most directors seem to just have 'good taste' in composers and the music they choose for their films. But its an imprecise process. There are a few guys, like John Carpenter and Mike Figgis, that actually do the music themselves. But thats very rare. Now is this because most directors consider music to be slightly less important than the other aspects of the film process? Or is it because you've just got too many other things to worry about/concentrate on? I'm not asking this because I DO think that music is hugely important in the filmmaking process, I feel that it is generally much less important than the other technical aspects, such as the cinematography and the editing. On the other hand, one could say that its hugely important, nearly as much as the acting, and is just underutilized by most directors.

Jim

Dear Jim:

The obvious reason that most directors don't compose their own scores is that they are not musicians. And just being a good musician does not make you a good composer, and being a good composer doesn't necessarily make you a film composer. Use "composer" three times in one sentence and it begins to sound like gibberish. I don't think that John Carpenter or Mike Figgis have any kind of edge over the rest of us non-composer directors--in fact, I have better scores than both of them because Joe LoDuca blows those guys out of the water: Joe knows more about music in general and film composition in specific in his baby finger than Carpenter and Figgis' total musical knowledge combined. I love the music part of filmmaking because it's purely psychological--what feeling do you want the scene to convey? Joe and I don't discuss instruments or anything specifically musical, it's all feelings. What makes me so good at this stage is that I encourage Joe's originality and basically yield to him on anything he considers to be important. By not getting in his way or making him do things he thinks are stupid, I make my film better.

Josh

Name: matt  
E-mail: matt@audioluxstudio.com

Dear Josh:

How come you don't have Richard Rush's "The Stunt Man" on your list? C'mon man... Bruce Schermer says Hello!

Dear Matt:

C'mon, nothin'. Steve Railsback in the lead is awful and it kills the entire picture. The last thing on Earth I wanted to see was Railsback messing around with Barbara Hershey. Peter O'Toole was good.

Josh

Name: lasermn  
E-mail: lasermn@usa.net

Dear Josh:

Any chance you'll add a Guest Book, so visitors can say something about your website?

Dear Lasermn:

What you got to say you can't say here?

Josh

Name: Billy Jack  
E-mail:

Josh,

What do you think of Tom Laughlin's directing style? Do you like the film, "Born Losers"?

Peace,  
Billy

Dear Billy:

As a kid I liked all the Billy Jack movies, even "The Trial of Billy Jack" (I never saw "Billy Jack Goes to Washington"). As for Laughlin's directorial style, I don't recall him having one; he simply covers the scenes like a TV director. Quite frankly, I think the most interesting aspect of the films is their hypocrisy--Billy Jack preaches peace, then kicks the shit out of everybody.

Josh

Name: S.C.  
E-mail: scornett@yahoo.com

Dear Dr. Becker,

I was wondering (aloud, even) if you've seen "Being John Malkovich", and if so, what your opinion was. Also, even though it seems that you're perpetually left out of the loop as to what's going on with it, any news on a release date for TSNKE, and how much of "Stryker's War" will be included?

I like pie.

Thanks for your time!

Dear S.C.:

Anchor Bay just informed me that the DVD of TSNKE is being mastered right now and will be out in September. I don't think there will be any of the Super-8 version on it, though. I sent it to them, but they've never followed up on it. Regarding "Being John Malkovich," yes, I saw it, and no, I didn't like it. I enjoyed the first 20 minutes or so, before they found the passageway into Malkovich's head, at which point I feel the story dropped completely dead. Why are we going into John Malkovich's head? No reason. Where is this leading us? Nowhere. By the time they get to the point of charging people money to go into his head, a subtitle should have crawled across the screen stating, "The screenwriter has entirely run out of ideas, this would be a perfect time to go get more candy."

Josh

Name: Brian Morrell  
E-mail: Brian@BJM-Music.fsnet.co.uk

Dear Josh:

I am a composer/orchestrator working in television in England. The main way of getting work in tv music is by word of mouth. Do movie directors choose their own composer, and if so do they listen to solicited music sent to them or rely on established agencies? In England finding directors to listen to music is almost impossible as the market is saturated with production companies. As a serious professional composer, how do I get top directors to listen to my music, and how do I find out about bidding for movie scores.

I would be grateful for any pointers or guidance you might be able to offer

B Morrell

Dear Brian:

There are agencies that handle nothing but composers, which, I suppose, you ought to look into. I don't deal with those agencies since I always work with the same composer. Let's face it, though, there is no part of the film or TV industry that's easy to break into. You've got to be both sharp and lucky. Good luck to you.

Josh

Name: SS

E-mail:

Josh,

Why do you think your films don't get snatched up by Film Festivals and/or Studios? I'd really like to know your thoughts.

Thanks,  
SS

Dear SS (Steven Spielberg?):

How the hell do I know? Maybe my stuff just isn't very good. Maybe it's too good. Maybe I'm just unlucky, which seems like definite possibility.

Josh

Name: Alan

E-mail: picquickstudio@aol.com

Dear Josh:

There have been about 8 CD releases of Joe Lo Duca's music from HTLJ and XENA so far. How do you think they stand as pieces in their own right? Any plans to have a CD release of music from JACK?

Dear Alan:

Joe will probably get Jack and Cleo released on CD, it's his scores for my features I'd like to see come out. And I think Joe is one of the really terrific composers working. He will be doing the score for my new film, "If I Had a Hammer," in the next few weeks and I can't wait. It's a part of the filmmaking process I particularly enjoy.

Josh

Name: August

E-mail: joxerfan@hotmail.com

Dear Josh:

Speaking of Shemps, fake and otherwise, did you happen to catch the ABC bio movie of the Stooges? While it certainly was not deep by any means, I thought it was a very sweet and affectionate look at their lives off camera. And a lot of little glimpses at the old studio system, vaudeville, etc.

Obviously you and some of your frequent collaborators really enjoyed the Stooges' work - how do you view their place in comedy, their place in film (short film, anyway) and do you have any favorite moments?

Thanks,  
August

Dear August:

I intentionally didn't watch it because the three guys were so utterly not who they were supposed to be. My friend also told me that these three guys recreated a number of Stooges routines, and that's something I really can't watch. It's difficult to make clear now, but for about 25 years The Three Stooges were the absolute bottom of the heap. Columbia gave their shorts away free with the features. You couldn't have less respect than those guys got. It wasn't until they began showing their shorts on TV in the 1950s and 60s that they actually got popular, and they were already old and both Curly and Shemp were both dead. I actually am quite fond of that short period there when Joe Besser joined the trio, which brought them to the end of their short career. Their place in comedy history, I think, is for establishing the very low-end of humor, which I personally find quite funny. I particularly like the short "Hula La La," with Shemp, where they are studio dance instructors sent to a Pacific island by studio chief Emil Sitka to teach the natives how to dance.

Josh

Name: JawBone  
E-mail: jawbone326@yahoo.com

Sup Josh-

This is kind of a weird question, but what exactly is a Fake Shemp? And why do they call it one?

THanks  
JB

Dear JawBone:

That's a good question. It works like this: First there was Larry, Moe & Curly, but Curly had several strokes (and subsequently died) and was replaced by his eldest brother, Shemp. After a few years Shemp got quite ill, too, and had to quit, but instead of immediately replacing him, they simply remade several of their older shorts with a guy pretending to be Shemp, who always has his back to the camera or something blocking his face--that's the Fake Shemp. Anyway, it simply became a term for being an extra in your buddy's movie. I'm a fake shemp in all three "Evil Dead" films.

Josh

Name: Steve  
E-mail: clitus2@hotmail.com

Dear Josh,

Do you know where I can obtain a video of the movie "The 25th Hour" which was made in 1967 and starred Anthony Quinn? I believe it was directed by Henri Verneuil. I've searched everywhere for it, including the Internet, with no luck.

Thanks,  
Steve

Dear Steve:

That's one of those weirdo, 60s, international productions. I checked Movies Unlimited and they didn't have it, so I have no suggestions. Good luck in your search. BTW, Leonard Maltin gave it a lousy review.

Josh

Name: Alan  
E-mail: picquickstudio@aol.com

Dear Josh:

Have you seen a New Zealand movie called "DESPERATE REMEDIES"? It aired recently in the UK. Kevin Smith, Michael Hurst and Jennifer Ward Leland were in it. It was weird but strangely compelling.

Dear Alan:

I thought it was pretty awful myself.

Josh

Name: Billy Pilgrim  
E-mail:

Josh,

Who are your favorite screenwriters? And, have you ever thought about writing a book about screenwriting or independent filmmaking?

Thanks,  
Billy

Dear Billy:

Well, let's see . . . ? Michael Wilson, Carl Foreman, Robert Bolt, Dudley Nichols, Billy Wilder & Charles Brackett, Billy Wilder & I.A.L. Diamond, Preston Sturges, Ben Hecht, Peter Stone, Ernest Lehman, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Herman Mankiewicz, Jules Furthman, Frank Nugent, Dalton Trumbo, Paddy Chayefsky, Horton Foote, Reginald Rose, Daniel Taradash, and the list goes on and on. As why I haven't written a book? I've been busy writing screenplays and making films. Perhaps when I have enough Structure essays I'll put them all together as a book (I'm pondering a 6th one right now).

Josh

Name: ALAN  
E-mail: picquickstudio@aol.com

Dear Josh:

In retrospect, "YOUNG HERCULES" must be looked upon as a mistake. Is that the general feeling? Surely the cost of making it must have hastened the demise of HTLJ? Ian Bohen, however, was far more effective in the role than Ryan Gosling. I've heard stories that Bohen provided headaches all round and they were glad to see him go. Right or wrong?

Dear Alan:

I never worked on the show--it was all New Zealand directors--so I don't know anything about it. I can't imagine that it had anything to do with the cancellation of "Hercules."

Josh

Name: frank rubino  
E-mail: frank.rubino@waters.com

Dear Josh:

As a boy I saw a movie with James Stewart called "Carbine Williams". Unfortunately I haven't found anyone or anywhere that has this movie in video form. If you could possibly direct me to someone who has a copy I would very much appreciate it.

Thanks

Dear Frank:

Well, I've seen it and I rather liked it. It's the story of the guy that invents the carbine rifle while he's in prison. I'll just bet you that [www.moviesunlimited.com](http://www.moviesunlimited.com) has it.

Josh

Name: ALAN  
E-mail: picquickstudio@aol.com

Dear Josh:

I hear that Michael Hurst is to be in an upcoming "JACK". Any chance of him reprising Iolaus in "XENA"? I know he has directed a Season Five episode. What is your opinion of actors who also direct? Clint Eastwood had it down to a fine art but his recent movies have been snooze fests.

Dear Alan:

Actually, Michael directed the last two episodes of "Jack" for this season. I have no idea what's happening next season on "Xena," which just wrapped this season ("Jack" wraps this week, I believe). As for actors directing, why not? They know how to talk to other actors. It is fairly absurd, however, that Robert Redford, Kevin Costner, and Mel Gibson are all Oscar-winning directors and Martin Scorsese hasn't won one. And as far as Clint Eastwood goes, I'm still so impressed that he made "Unforgiven" that I forgive him everything. And let's face it, Clint's worst pictures are still easier to watch than a lot of other people's best films. I just saw

"True Crime," which wasn't very good, but it was easy to watch and had a really good scene when Eastwood goes to see the guy in prison for the first time and the guy tells him he's put his faith in Jesus and Clint growls, "I don't give a rat's ass about Jesus" and goes on to discuss his reporter's nose and how he smells shit. Anyway, I don't think it matters how you get to directing, it's what you know when you get there.

Josh

Name: Bob  
E-mail: [newsman@cris.com](mailto:newsman@cris.com)

Hey Josh,

I have your "Running Time" DVD, and have seen it at least four times. It reminds me of a classic, live TV show except for the mobile camera and foul language. You and Bruce do good work when nobody else gets in the way. The music and commentary were great.

Now on to a Xena question. The "Kindred Spirits" episode you directed was fun, but did the final cut of that episode make any sense to you? I got the feeling that Xena/Gab/Joxer had a conspiracy to teach the Amazons a lesson of some kind, but then the whole thing turned into a WWF card. Was there a story? Did I miss something?

Dear Bob:

As I've explained before, the script for that episode was entirely thrown out a week before shooting. Rob Tapert whipped up a new outline and had a completely new script written, which came in on Saturday night and we began shooting on Monday morning. That the episode makes any sense at all is something of a miracle, and a true testament to Rob's ability to pull these stories up out of nowhere. I think it turned out pretty well, considering.

Josh

Name: Buzz  
E-mail: [robertlong35@hotmail.com](mailto:robertlong35@hotmail.com)

Dear Josh:

Believe it or not, Thou shall not kill except is one of my favourite films, unfortunatly the \$5.00 copy I bought at a FT Drum,ny PX 10 years ago is worn out, where can I get another copy?

Dear Buzz:

It sounds like you got your five bucks worth. You can get it almost anywhere now, Reel.com, Amazon.com, Best Buy, etc. BTW, it looks MUCH better this time around since we did a very nice new transfer.

Josh

Name: Debbie

E-mail: DRXena1012@aol.com

Dear Josh:

Enjoyed reading about Bette Davis and your opinion about her acting. Have been impressed with Angelina Jolie, especially in Gia and feel that she has much to offer in the sameway that Ms. Davis did, a quality of strength and an a unbelivable range of acting. Is she someone you think will continue to be around in the future and would you like to work with her? Are there any entertainers out there you would like to write or direct for any why? By the way, thanks for you work on Xena.

Debbie

Dear Debbie:

I really haven't seen much of her work. She certainly has a look, and big, pouty lips. As to being another Bette Davis, well, there was only one of her. Pretty young actresses come and go pretty quickly, let's see if she sticks around for a while. Winning an Oscar isn't necessarily a good thing, though. It frequently sends actor's prices up too high too quickly and they will no longer take the cool roles that don't have a lot of money attached to them. So, we'll see . . .

Josh

Name: Bruce

E-mail:

Hi Josh,

What do you think of the war film, "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo"? Mervyn LeRoy did a hell of a job, don't you think?

What are some of your all-time favorite war films?

All the best,  
Bruce

BTW, did you know that Anthony Quinn will be 85 years old this weekend? What an amazing actor, huh?

Dear Bruce:

My buddy, Tony. He and I go way back. Tony once said to me, "Josh my friend, I've worked with DeMille, Lean, and Fellini, but you're by far the best director I've ever had the pleasure of working for." At least, that's how I remember it. Now if I could just find the roach, I'd toast it up. Ah, yes, "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo," I love that picture! That's where they crash the plane into the China Sea and the guy breaks both his arms. I love the fact that plan works like this--you take off from a carrier, bomb Tokyo, but you don't have enough fuel to get back to any solid ground or any safe place, so you have do ditch the plane near China and hope that Chang Kai Shek's men find you and not the other guys. It's so silly it has to be true. Now, my favs . . . (these are not in any order):

1. "Bridge on the River Kwai"
2. "Lawrence of Arabia"
3. "Patton"

4. "The Longest Day"
5. "Battleground"
6. "A Walk in the Sun"
7. "The Duellists"
8. "The Sand Pebbles"
9. "Apocalypse Now"
10. "Platoon"
11. "Paths of Glory"
12. "From Here to Eternity"

Sorry, I couldn't stop at ten.

Josh

Name: Michael Anthony Lee  
E-mail: mal@kingston.net

Josh,

I can't find your banner to put on my website. Where is it? I emailed your web guy and the email did not go through.

Best,  
Michael

Dear Michael:

That damn web guy. I keep him in a cage and use a fire hose on him, but he still won't do his job. Next comes electro-shock.

Josh

Name: DREW  
E-mail:

Dear Josh:

This may seem like a dumb question, but I'm gonna ask it anyway. I'm a big "Superman" fanatic, and if you were tapped to write the new "Superman" screenplay, what would you go for in terms of plot, style, and characterization. Thanks.

Dear Drew:

I wouldn't. I would never take the job, nor would it ever be offered to me. I never read comic books and don't care about them at all. While everyone around me as a kid was reading Superman and Spiderman, I was reading Asimov and Ellison. I think this has made me more prepared than them.

Josh

Name: Danny Cork  
E-mail: [McDanzz@aol.com](mailto:McDanzz@aol.com)

Dear Josh:

This is pretty irrelevant but I had to give it a shot (regarding Bob Trebor's Kubrick question): I think it was the guy that directed 'The Lion in Winter'. Kubrick had told him he should direct, and then found himself nominated alongside him at the Academy Awards in '69 I think. Does that sound right?

later,  
Danny Cork

Dear Danny:

Good work. Yes, it's Anthony Harvey who edited "Dr. Strangelove," then went on to direct "A Lion in Winter" and was against Kubrick in the 1968 nominations (the '68 awards are given in '69, so right about that, too). Kubrick, by the way, was nominated for "2001."

Josh

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