

VARIETY. COM/FEATURES ■ A1



SOCIAL CLICK: Nearly 2 million online fans were following Miley Cyrus when the teen celeb canceled her Twitter account last October.

TWEET SIXTEEN

Tech-savvy stars brave virtual space

By TARA McNAMARA

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V talkshow appearances, magazine interviews and press junkets are so 2008 when it comes to marketing young performers. Increasingly, brand builders find more power in using digital media to give fans direct (albeit virtual) access to their favorite celebrities online.

"The traditional model is PR-to-media-to-consumer. Now we have the ability to go straight to the consumer," says Laura Ackermann, senior publicist for L.A. praisery Much and House, which represents such youth talent as Yara Shahidi ("Imagine That") and Mitchel Musso ("Hannah Montana").

According to Walt Disney Records' media honcho Matt Fitz-Henry, "It's important to create content and distribution networks that allow fans to interact with our artists wherever they spend time online," which entails making webisodes, iPod applications and special online widgets. But it's the (relatively) un-

See VIRTUAL page A26

THE ON-SET OF CHILDHOOD

GROWING UP IN CHARACTER

Top properties demand decade-or-more commitments from moppets

By KATHY TRACY

rom "The Chronicles of Narnia" to "Twilight" and "Hannah Montana" to "Drake & Josh," youth entertainment seems to depend less on oneoffs than massive multiyear properties. That in turn can put an enormous burden on the cast, who must commit the better part of their childhoods to playing characters indelibly identified with the franchise brand. In some cases, they are the brand on whom the whole enterprise depends. (The Harry Potter series was able to replace its Dumbledore after the death of actor Richard Harris, but could it survive the loss of its star, Daniel Radcliffe?)

On the television front, the two kidvid heavyweights, Nickelodeon and Disney, follow production schedules geared toward minimizing work stress.

We respect the balance between work life and personal life," says Paula Kaplan,



WHEN DANIEL MET HARRY: Radcliffe and co-stars Rupert Grint and Emma Watson have been playing kid wizards since 2000.

Nickelodeon's executive VP for talent. "In our adult world, nobody accommodates us for down time. But in a child's life on a set, we do take that seriously. At our studios on Sunset Boulevard, where we shoot 'iCarly' and 'Victorious,' the greenrooms are filled with games $See~{\bf GROWING}~\stackrel{_}{page}~A24$

INSIDE

have opened since last year's Youth Impact Report, demonstrating once again how talent not yet old enough to drink are driving some of the industry's top properties. From teeny-bopper sensation Justin Bieber to YouTube breakout Lucas Cruikshank (aka "Fred"), these tyros are calling the shots.

— Peter Debruge, Associate Editor, Features



Power of Youth

Variety fetes five stars who've used their fame to aid others - at its annual philanthropy party. PAGE A2

Impact list

Meet the 25 under-21 talents and adult mentors who transformed youth entertainment in 2009. PAGE A5



Alumni update

Last year's Impact stars are still making waves. Find out how they've been keeping busy. PAGE A5

You may not recognize them today, but you will a year from now. Meet tomorrow's young stars. PAGE A18

Looking ahead

Teen writers guestedit a page of stories focused on issues affecting them. PAGE A28







V PLUS ■ YOUTH IMPACT REPORT '09 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2009 A2 VARIETY. COM/FEATURES

POWER OF YOUTH: HONOREES

WHAT: Variety's Power of Youth 'World's Greatest Block Party' **WHEN:** Saturday – Noon to 4 p.m.



Junior league leads by example at Power party

By TARA McNAMARA

U going to the Variety Power of Youth?" The tweet from 13-year-old actress Bella Thorne sums up the excited Web chatter among kid stars in anticipa-tion of "The World's Greatest Block Party" Saturday on the Paramount lot.

Now in its third year, Variety's Power of Youth event has become a hot ticket among teen talent, serving up fun, performances and food

to both young stars and children directly affected by the event's beneficiaries: Starlight Children's Foundation, which helps seriously ill children and their families cope with their diseases through entertainment and education; and L.A.'s BEST, which provides after-school activities and education to more than 28,000 economically disadvantaged kids.

The afternoon will include performances by Honor Society, School of Rock and the casts of "Fame" and ABC Family's "Make It or Break It," as attendees have the chance to visit activity stations set up by sponsors Best Buy @15, Electronic Arts, Sony PlayStation, Chipotle, Coca-Cola and Kyocera.

Last year, teen stars Selena Gomez and Miranda Cosgrove competed in a virtual dance-off. That kind of spontaneous moment is what sets *Variety*'s Power of Youth event apart (the year before, Miley Cyrus and Vanesas Hudgens did an impromptu karaoke together), creating an unforgettable day for disadvantaged and seriously ill children to interact with the performers they admire on a peer level. Young stars, too, collect magical moments.

See EVENT page A26

EN WHY: At last year's event, from top,Selena Gomez painted a mural for St. Jude Children's Hospital, Kyle Massey caught up with Sprouse twins Dylan and Cole, Mitchel Musso visited with Variety publisher Brian Gott, and Meaghan Jette Martin wore pink.

These five young stars — recipients of Variety's Power of Youth prize — use their celebrity to help others in need

CORBIN BLEU Starlight spokesman sees org's effect on families

WHO: Best known as Zac Efron's best friend Chad in the "High School Musical" movies, Corbin Bleu has also made a name for himself in the music industry. Earlier this year, he released "Speed of Light," his second studio album. Film and television credits include "Galaxy Quest" (1999), "Free Style" (2008) and "The Beautiful Life" (2009).

WHAT: Replacing Jamie Lee Curtis, Bleu is the new national spokesperson for Starlight Children's Foundation, dedicated to improving the quality of life for children with chronic and life-threatening illnesses and injuries by providing entertainment, education and family activities that help them cope with the pain, fear and isolation of prolonged illness.

WHY: "I started about five years ago when I did a hospital visit and was shocked

Steve Carell.



at what a huge difference the (organization) makes for not only these children but also their families, who are also affected. I consider family one of the most important aspects of life, because at the end of the day your family is who is always going to be there for you. When it comes to these children, their family is all they have because some of them never get to leave the hospital."

WHAT'S NEXT: Besides recently launching a fundraising page (firstgiving. com/corbinbleu), Bleu will be participating in Starlight's annual the Great Escape holiday party at the CBS lot. "We convert the whole space into a winter wonderland with snow, Santa Claus, gifts for the kids to take home, everything! These children get to forget about their worries for a while."

MIRANDA COSGROVE 'iCarly' star seeks a cure with math

WHO: Miranda Cosgrove's breakthrough performance on Nickelodeon's "Drake and Josh" led to her own show on the net, "iCarly." The actress-singer's film credits include "The School of Rock," "Keeping Up With the Steins" and an upcoming voice performance in Universal's animated "Despicable Me" alongside

WHAT: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, located in Memphis, Tenn., is one of the world's premier pediatric cancer research centers. Its mission is to find cures for children with cancer and other catastrophic diseases through research and treatment. Cosgrove is involved with the organization's fundraising program, Math-a-Thon, a free math curriculum supplement for grades

WHY: "I got a call about visiting the hospital with the Jonas Brothers and Angus Jones ("Two and a Half Men"). We went and met the kids, who were so cool. That really got me into the (organization). It just seemed like a perfect fit, because I love kids and I love making people happy, and at the same time, I had a lot of fun doing karaoke and drawing games and just meeting everyone and getting to know them.



WHAT'S NEXT: Along with future visits to St. Jude, Cosgrove will participate in another upcoming Math-a-Thon event. In addition to recently completing its \$1 billion, five-year expansion, St. Jude is expanding the hospital's Intl. Outreach and Domestic Affiliate programs as well as an alliance with Rady Children's Hospital and the U. of California.

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JESSE McCARTNEY

Multihyphenate helps City of Hope raise funds for cancer research

WHO: Platinum-selling singer, songwriter and actor Jesse McCartney sold more than 1.5 million copies of his first album, "Beautiful Soul," and most recently re-released his third album, "Departure: Recharged." When he's not recording and writing songs for Toni Braxton and Leighton Meester, McCartney can be seen or heard (previously and now) on the big and small screens in "All My Children" ('98-'99), "Law and Order: SVU" (2008) and as the voice of Theodore in "Alvin & the Chipmunks" and its upcoming "Squeakquel."

WHAT: City of Hope, one of

the nation's leading research and treatment for cancer, diabetes and other life-threatening diseases. Designated as a Comprehensive Cancer Center, City of Hope's research and treatment protocols advance care throughout the nation.

WHY: "Bob Cavallo (chairman of the Buena Vista Music Group and) the head of Hollywood Records, which has been my record label for the last six years, introduced me to City of Hope. Once I had the chance to really study the center and all of the things that they do, especially with their pediatric programs,

I became a little obsessed." Besides frequenting the Duarte, Calif.-based center, McCartney recently took to the Nokia Theater stage with Miley Cyrus and Demi Lovato for the second annual Concert for Hope, raising funds for the center's cancer research efforts.

WHAT'S NEXT: McCartney plans to continue fund-raising for City of Hope, which is in the final construction stages of a new facility, the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Center for Cancer Immunotherapeutics and Tumor Immunology, opening in early 2010.





ANNALYNNE McCORD

'90210' vamp has a vision for the Blind Project

WHO: As the popular, influential, rich, bitchy Naomi Clark on "90210," AnnaLynne McCord is the poster girl for Beverly Hills teen snobs. McCord's television and film credits include "Ugly Betty" (2007), "Nip/Tuck" (2007-09) and "Fired Up" (2009).

WHAT: The Blind Project, a nonprofit New York City-based organization dedicated to raising awareness and improving the quality of life for sex-trafficking victims. The org, focused on Southeast Asia, provides access to rehabilitation services, quality education and innovative economic opportunities.

WHY: "Before '90210,' I went through what I like to call a young-life crisis. It got to a point where I was done with Hollywood. I felt lost, which is when I got back in contact with my old friend and philanthropist Jessica Minhas and told her that I needed to be doing something hands-on. It was perfect timing, because she happened to be helping to launch the Blind Project. I immediately knew it was an organization I wanted to work with, so despite having turned down '90210' several times, I started researching the show and the hype around it and quickly realized what it could be for the Blind Project."

WHAT'S NEXT: "My sisters and I are planning to go to Phnom Penh and Bucket to volunteer for the Christmas break. We are also starting an all-green clothing line, called Sisters 3, and are in the process of writing a book on beauty, skin care and fashion centered on beauty from within." (Thirty-three percent of proceeds from both endeavors will go to the Blind Project.)

KEKE PALMER Helping motivate and inspire through the Boys & Girls Clubs of America

WHO: Singer-actress Keke Palmer's breakthrough performance in "Akeelah and the Bee" (2006) led to her current starring role as a 15-year-old who runs the youth division of a major fashion label in Nickelodeon's live-action comedy series "True Jackson, VP."

WHAT: Boys & Girls Clubs of America, which provides young people ages 6 to 18 with characterdevelopment programs. Created in 1860, the national organization now has more than 4,300 clubs, serving some 4.5 million young people. Palmer is a spokesperson for BGCA program It's Cool to Be Smart (ICTBS), which serves underprivileged youth by providing access to role models, music artists and positive messages that encourage success in education.

WHY: "The executive director of ICTBS, Curtis Benjamin, approached (me) three years ago and asked me if I wanted to go talk to some kids about my experiences. I said sure because I love talking to my peers. It ended up being a lot of fun. I love trying to motivate and inspire them and let them know

there is more out there in life than the neighborhood they live in."

WHAT'S NEXT: A visitor to Boys & Girls Clubs throughout the country and throughout the year, she also flies winners of various BGCA contests to her premieres. Meanwhile, BGCA continues to work on Impact 2012, a five-year strategic plan launched in 2007 and which includes the establishment of new clubs in communities where the needs are greatest, aiming to reach a total of 5,000 local service locations by 2012.

— Profiles by Addie Morfoot



YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: BIGSCREEN KIDS

In Variety's third annual spotlight on the under-21 talent scene, we single out the dynamic youngsters driving all sectors of the business as well as the over-21 pros who help guide their creative endeavors

TAYLOR LAUTNER

Team Jacob captain

year ago, Robert Pattinson was easily the most popular "Twilight" star. These days, as any teen can tell you, he's got competition from 16-year-old Taylor Lautner, who plays wolf boy

Impact: The "Twilight" actor buffed up to keep the starring role of Jacob in "New Moon."

Next: A small role in Garry Marshall's "Valentine's Day," the David Sladehelmed "Eclipse" and a number of "exciting projects" he's not ready to announce yet.

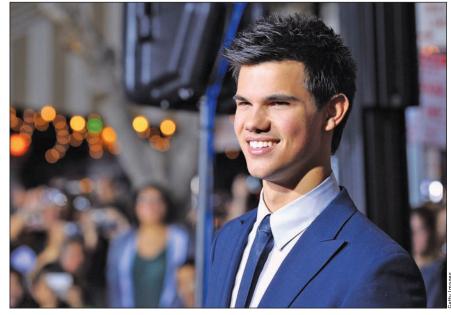
Causes: Lollipop Theater Network.

(and stand-in love interest) Jacob in "New Moon.'

But in a Hollywood tale well known to Twihards, Lautner almost didn't get the gig.
When it came

time to green-light the "Twilight" sequel, producers worried that the slim teen (who got his break in "The

Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl") wouldn't be able to portray Jacob, whom author Stephenie Meyer described as markedly taller and more muscular than the pipsqueak



Bella initially ignores.

Not wanting to surrender the role, Lautner began an intense training regimen before "Twilight" even hit theaters. By the time a decision had to be made, he'd gained an impressive 30 pounds of muscle. But it wasn't weightlifting that did the trick, but eating as often as every two hours.

Speaking on the set of "New Moon," Lautner said, "At one point, my trainer said, 'Put anything in your

mouth. Go to McDonald's, get the biggest shake possible, I just need to get calories in you.' Because my body fat at the time was only, like, 7.5%

And no one was happier the actor made it work than director Chris Weitz, who points out, "He went from a character that had three small scenes in the first movie and only worked three days or something to one of the dominant characters.

- $Gregory \ Ellwood$

ANTON YELCHIN

Franchise freshman

ith 30 roles in a decadelong career, 20-year-old Anton Yelchin went from respected indie actor ("Charlie Bartlett," "Alpha Dog") to blockbuster star this summer by booking iconic roles in "Star Trek' (as young Russian Starfleet officer Pavel Chekov) and "Terminator Salvation" (play-

Impact: Starred in two of the summer's biggest blockbusters, "Star Trek" and "Terminator Salvation."

Next: "Memoirs of a Teenage Amnesiac" with Emma Roberts, then director Jodie Foster's "The Beaver."

ing Kyle Reese).
"I'd be bored doing the same thing," Yelchin says. "One of the beautiful things about this job is you can see how many different sides of yourself exist and imaginary things you can experience.

From the outset, Yelchin made a pact with his parents that he would only act for

the right reasons. When his first audition resulted in booking a Chuck E. Cheese commercial, it became his first and last TV spot. "My parents just wanted me to enjoy myself," he says. "We decided if I didn't enjoy it, that was that."

So Yelchin focused on the bigscreen, which has become his obsession. "Everything I learn about or read, I apply in one way or the other to filmmaking. I'm a movie nerd," he says. "Filmmaking is the greatest, most relevant art form out there. I think it's the most intimately connected to our culture and our

Yelchin, who also portrayed a teen with prom-date issues in the $2009\,$ anthology "New York, I Love You," is currently costarring with Mel Gibson in "The Beaver" — a film far less scandalous than it sounds, he insists. "People always want to make sort of erotic reference, like it's an artsy porn," says Yelchin, who plays the son of a repressed man who speaks only through a hand puppet.

experience in the world.' Tara McNamara

DANNY BOYLE & LOVELEEN TANDAN

'Slumdog' co-directors

lumdog Millionaire" director Danny Boyle wasn't the least bit intimidated by all the young actors called for by Simon Beaufoy's script, having worked with kids before on his 2004 caper "Millions." In fact, to hear the Oscar winner tell it, young per-formers actually come with less baggage.

"When they say a line, it's absolutely unadorned. It's just direct and simple," Boyle says. "There's no other agenda, there's nothing else going on other than the line, other than that instant. Kids have that purity about

them. We lose that as we get older." The hard part was finding suitable actors to play the lead roles as adolescents, teenagers and young adults.

"I have to say, searching for the three key players in three different age groups, particularly at 6 and 12



years, was the most challenging part," casting director Loveleen Tandan says of her eight-month search. "They had to feel alike in so many ways, but more than anything, in spirit.

Since asking Indian slum children to speak English would have been inauthentic (not to mention difficult), Tandan convinced Boyle to do some

Impact: Marshalled the young cast of "Slumdog Millionaire" to Oscar and B.O. glory.

Next: Boyle will helm "127 Hours" for Searchlight. Tandan has just completed the script for her directorial debut, about a teenage girl in Delhi.

Causes: Set up a fund for the slum children, the Jai Ho Trust,

of their dialogue in Hindi. And because Boyle didn't speak the language, Tandan stepped outside her role and helped translate his instruc-

tions to the young cast, earning a cohelmer credit for her contributions.

"You have to make sure that the atmosphere on-set is conducive to working with children, and that also suits me," Boyle says. "I like a set where things aren't pompous, where people are genuine and speak plainly.

Shalini Dore

MILEY CYRUS: Still Hollywood's teen queen, Cyrus saw "Hannah Montana: The Movie" open No. 1, earning \$155.5 million worldwide. Her single "Party in the U.S.A." topped charts.



DAKOTA FANNING: After earning cred with adults for several daring roles, she decided to build her teen base as a member of the Volturi in "New Moon."



DAKOTA BLUE RICHARDS: Apart from BBC's "Dustbin Baby," the "Golden Compass" star has stayed under the radar.

KRISTEN STEWART: Reprised her role of Bella in mega-blockbuster "New Moon." Is lensing "The Runaways," portraying the all-girl-punk band's leader Joan Jett.

ADRIAN ALONSO: "La misma luna" star has a handful of Mexican pics n production, including 'El muro de al lado,' and is still courting Hollywood.

YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: BIGSCREEN KIDS

ABIGAIL BRESLIN

Little sister, big roles

he tearjerker drama "My Sister's Keeper" and undead comedy "Zombieland" have almost nothing in common, except for Abigail Breslin's portrayal of fiercely protective sisters in both.

Such female bonding was a new experience for Breslin, 13, who has only brothers in real life. On the set of Nick Cassavetes'

Impact: Showed off her range this year in "My Sister's Keeper" and "Zombieland."

Next: Just started rehearsals for "The Miracle Worker" revival on Broadway.

Causes: Project Sunshine, which provides for children who have long-term medical needs, and St. Hubert's Animal Welfare Center in New Jersey. "Keeper," Breslin played the bone-marrow-donating sister of a leukemiastricken Sofia Vassilieva. The two share a room and the agony of cancer as it takes over both their lives.

"Before we started filming, Sofia and I got to go shopping for the stuff that's in our set bedroom," Breslin recalls. "During the shoot, Nick worked with us to get all of the difficult scenes right. There were no monitors. He'd just sit with us, and it was so helpful."

The film's central

theme of a family struggling with cancer was personal to Breslin, whose grandfather died of lung cancer. "I know how a family can focus completely on the person getting better," she says.

In Ruben Fleischer's postapocalyptic "Zombieland," Breslin plays a shrewd, shotgun-wielding partner-in-crime to big sis Emma Stone.

"We became really close," she says of Stone. "I met her at a shooting range, practicing how to use a gun with Ruben. We also drove four hours from Atlanta to Valdosta, Ga., together."



Although Breslin may be the fifthyoungest Oscar nominee in Academy history, she says she's no unapproachable wunderkind.

"I am a normal teenager. I am definitely not mature," she says. "In fact, me and my cousin have been counting down the days until 'New Moon' opens."

— Sandie Angulo Chen

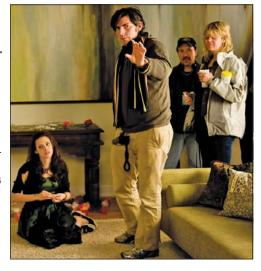
CHRIS WEITZ

Fresh blood for 'Twilight' franchise

hough he never planned it that way, writerproducer-director Chris Weitz has had a hand in grooming some of Hollywood's top young stars. Över the past decade, he launched several teen careers with the seminal teen sex farce "American Pie," helped 12-yearold Nicholas Hoult hold his own against Hugh Grant in "About a Boy" and provided newcomer Dakota Blue Richards with the confidence to carry the overseas hit "The Golden

Compass." Most recently, Weitz took over the "Twilight" saga from director Catherine Hardwicke, tackling the challenge of adapting a book many deemed uncinematic.

But Weitz refuses to take credit for his teen and early-twenties cast. "Even though they are young people, I am dealing with quite technically proficient actors," says Weitz, who thinks the claim that directors prefer not to work with child actors is overstated. "I think some of my colleagues don't want to deal with actors at all and would much rather work with the ones on autopilot. If I could diagnose my fellow directors, it (would be) of having actor-phobia — 'thespiaphobia.' It's much easier to engage in technical matters and cameras and all these concrete things than (dealing with) actors or the feelings they are supposed to portray."



Impact: Kid-friendly helmer took over the "Twilight" saga for "New Moon."

Next: "The Gardener." The half-English/half-Spanish-language drama will focus on the relationship between a Mexican immigrant and his teen son who can barely speak Spanish.

Causes: Disabled American Veterans, Kham Aid Foundation (relief for Tibetans).

And while Weitz enjoys discussing dialogue and motivations with precocious stars, he's also proud to watch past collaborators mature. Not long ago, Weitz introduced an all-grown-up Hoult to director Tom Ford, who cast the now-20-year-old actor in "A Single Man," a film Weitz also co-produced.

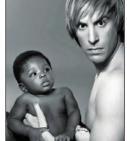
"It makes me feel what parents must feel when they see their kids reach college age," he says.

— Gregory Ellwood

R-RATED BABIES Stealing scenes in 'Bruno,' 'The Hangover' and 'Precious'

rom "Baby Carlos" bonking his head on a cab door in "The Hangover" to Sacha Baron Cohen retrieving "Baby O.J." at the LAX baggage carousel in "Bruno," this year's R-rated films appear to put tots through some pretty tough stuff. However, few things are more closely regulated on set than the treatment of babies, thanks to strict codes and union regulations.

According to California state law, babies (ages 6 months to 2 years) are allowed to spend a maximum of two hours in front of the cameras. The law also dictates that there must be a guardian, social worker and nurse on set when an infant or baby is working. Though not legally required, stu-



dios also often employ a baby wrangler to help keep a child in the right mindset.

Dawn Jeffory-Nelson, a wrangler who worked on "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events," tries to find ways to make games out of tasks that need to be performed on a shooting day. "In 'Lemony Snicket,' the babies actu-



ally needed to be inside a cage for some scenes, so I had the cage that was going to be used delivered to where the babies were staying," she says. "We played inside the cage with their toys, and we always opened the cage instantly if they ever felt uncomfortable, so the cage was a playhouse to them."



With "Little Mongo," the Down syndrome baby Mo'Nique pushes off her lap in "Precious," it was director Lee Daniels' niece who located the right kid. Usually, that task falls to the extras department.

"You're really looking for a baby that's stranger-friendly, who can go to anyone and be happy," says Alex Morawec, owner of Major Minors Management. "Identical twins and

backup babies are often cast to be sure that rules about time on set are followed."

Baby Carlos was played by twins (whose names were omitted from "The Hangover's" credits), for example, and Bruno's African baby alternated between twins Chigozie and Chibundu Orukwowu.

– Karen Idelson

ALUMN IPDATE

ANDY FICKMAN: "Race to Witch Mountain" earned a respectable \$67 million at the box office. Has a few pics in the pipeline, including Disney comedy "You Again" and Par's "Give Me a Call."

CATHERINE HARD-WICKE: The "Twilight" sequel went to Chris Weitz, but she has "Maximum Ride" and "If I Stay" lined up.



LAURENT CANTET: The French helmer's highly acclaimed "The Class" earned an Oscar nomination for foreign-language movie but lost to Japan's "Departures."

DEBRA MARTIN CHASE:

Producing Fox Searchlight's "Just Wright" with Queen Lati fah and Paula Patton.



SELENA GOMEZ: Her Disney Channel movie "Princess Protection Program" premiered as the No. 1 cable telecast of 2009, only to be trumped by her "Wizards of Waverly Place: The Movie."



MAKI HORIKITA: Continues to work in Japan with the film "Professor Layton and the Eternal Diva" up next.

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YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: BIGSCREEN KIDS

CLAUDIO GUBITOSI Giffoni guardian

hen Claudio Gubitosi was 17, he got an idea for an event exploring what was then the obscure ghettolike world of cinema for kids.

Gubitosi's inspiration germinated into Giffoni, the planet's prime fixture for children's cinema, a celebration of kids and moviemaking based in the small town of Giffoni Valle

Impact: The world's leading kid-focused fest celebrates its 40th anni in 2010.

Next: Giffoni Multimedia Valley a \$45 million complex, comprising expanded fest digs, a children's film museum and a production studio - should be ready in 2014.

Causes: He helped launch Giffoni's Aura charity, which brings movies to kids in Italy's underprivileged South and is also active in Africa.

Piana, Italy.
Driven by his vision, what began as a tiny showcase for kiddie pics from Northern Europe and the then-Soviet Union has flourished over four decades into a year-round cultural enterprise centered around its defining concept: "There are no spectators at

Giffoni, just protagonists."
This year, Giffoni's 39th edition doubled in length to two weeks — the first focused on ages 3-12, the second on 13 all the way to 21. No longer just a fest, the newly rebranded Giffoni Experience hosted 2,800 jurors ages 3-17 from 42 countries as guests of local families, along with such stars as Eva Mendes,

Naomi Watts, Christina Ricci and Wynona Ryder, who made the trek not to tubthump their latest films but rather to conduct master classes

at this unique cinematic camp.
With a wide web of global offshoots, including Giffoni Australia, and cross-border activities, such as a European Youth Media confab held by Gubitosi last week in Warsaw, Giffoni stands as testimony to the limitless growth that constant reinvention can bring. The irony is that now, "Seventeen is the age best represented at Giffoni, as well as the age I was when I conceived it," Gubitosi observes.

Nick Vivarelli



DAVID KROSS Revealing 'Reader'



hen then-16-year-old David Kross initially auditioned for Stephen Daldry's "The Reader," his mother worried whether he would be able to graduate from school. "I had already missed four months of school to make my previous movie, 'Krabat,' and I wasn't the best student, so I had to make a

deal with her," recalls the young Ger-Impact: Held man actor, who was himself worried about something else entirely: the his own opposite Kate Winslet's nude scenes he'd have to shoot with star Kate Winslet. Oscar-winning "That was the first thing I thought performance in 'The Reader" as

Next: Starring in the true story 'Same Same but Different," about a young German tourist who falls in love, "this time with someone my age," he jokes.

her much-younger

lover.

Causes: Kross says he's waiting to find a cause where it's more than just writing a check.

of when I read the film's script: 'Oh my God, I have to do sex scenes.' Kross had ample time to prepare, however. He spent three months

working with a dialect coach improving his English and spent both his 17th and 18th birthdays on set. Daldry waited until after Kross turned 18 to shoot the film's steamier scenes.

"I was terrified, of course. I was really, really nervous to do those scenes," Kross, now 19, admits. "But Stephen and Kate were very supportive, and it was all very choreographed and technical. It wasn't like he just said, 'Improvise, and I'll turn the camera on."

As for his mother, Kross knows she saw his critically hailed performance, but he sheepishly adds, "I never want to see the film with my parents."

Not that Kross says he has any complaints about the portrayal of his onscreen affair with his Oscar-winning costar. "Kate's very funny and smart and charming, and it's not hard to fall in love with her." — Sandie Angulo Chen

JESSE HARRIS

Fast fest learner

esse Harris knows all about the challenges facing teen filmmakers. After all, he used to be one. "Basically, I convinced my parents it would be a good idea to take my college money and make a feature film with it," Harris

Impact: Co-founded NFFTY, the largest fest dedicated to ages 22-and-under talent.

Next: Developing an online festival submission system with San Francisco-based company Indee.TV as an alternative to Without a Box.

Causes: The carbonneutral event features a NFFTY Earth sidebar focusing on films with environmental or social justice messages.

says. At age 17, he wrote and directed "Living Life," hustling it to festivals before securing a limited multicity release.

As others caught wind of his story, young filmmakers from around the world began to contact Harris for advice and help on their own projects, motivating him to co-found the National Film Festival for Talented Youth (NFFTY), a sprocket opera dedicated exclusively to helmers 22 and younger. Three years in, Harris and his team receive more than 400 submissions from kids of

all ages, selecting roughly a quarter of them for the fest (Harris suggests teens start out helming shorts,



which make up the majority of NFFTY's program).

"Our youngest filmmaker to date was 7 years old," beams Harris, now 23. "There's everything from a really rich USC student who spent \$30,000 to a kid who made a film for \$10. We really look more at the story when we're picking films.'

Attendance topped 4,000, with most of the filmmakers present. In addition to showing their films, Harris hosts a number of industry guests for panels. "It's kind of like producing a film. You have to raise the money every year," he explains. "It's not like we just screen these films in a classroom. We use the best theaters in Seattle."

Peter Debruge

MIRANDA COSGROVE: "iCarly" is Nick's No. 1 series. Sang the closing song in "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs.'

THOMAS DEKKER: "Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles" may have been canceled and his role in "Fame" recast, but he gave a moving perf as a cancer patient in "My Sister's Keeper."

MARK INDELI-CATO: "Ugly Betty," now in its fourth season, is keeping the young scenestealer busy.

LAUREN LEVINE: The producer had her hands full between holiday special "Merry Christmas, Drake and Josh" and Nick telepic 'Spectacular!" (which didn't quite live up to its name).

BRENDA HAMPTON: Her show "The Secret Life of the American Teenager, is ABC Family's

most popular

offering.



RICH ROSS: Disney Channel top per was tapped to chair the Mouse House studios in October.





YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: CHANNELING TALENT

THE MEN OF 'WIZARDS OF WAVERLY PLACE'

Meet the young stars and their producers

op-rated "Wizards of Waverly Place" may be a starring vehicle for Disney girl Selena Gomez, but its appeal also rests on the shoulders of actors David Henrie (20) and Jake T. Austin (15), who play her supernatural sibs.

"I'm from a big Italian family, so I could really relate to the family dynamics of 'Wizards," says Henrie, whose first job was on "Providence."

Impact: Selena Gomez may steal the spotlight, but these guys were crucial in turning the Disney Channel's most popular series, "Wizards of Waverly Place," into an Emmy-winning hit for exec producers Peter Murrieta and Todd Greenwald.

Next: David Henrie will play the lead in Platinum Comics' "The Weapon," while Jake T. Austin lends his voice to Fox's animated "Rio," from "Ice Age" director Carlos Saldanha.

Causes: Henrie is writing and directing a short for Code Blue, which helps homeless teens. Austin attends events for the Los Angeles and St. Jude children's hospitals.

The equally ambitious Austin, who says he grew up "always wanting to be the center of attention, constantly entertaining and doing funny voices," got his start modeling. "There's a lot of me in Max. He's the wild card, and we're

"My sister and I are

very combative in the

show, which is great to

different from our char-

The accomplished

young actor, whose credits include "The Pitts,"

"That's So Raven" and

"How I Met Your Moth-

er," spends his free time

tion and writing his own

learning about produc-

"Wizards" that will air

next year).

play, as we're both so

acters in real life.

both very adventurous," says Austin, who broadened his resume with key roles in "Hotel for Dogs" and Lionsgate's upcoming "The Perfect Game." He's also had a thriving voiceover career, playing the lead in Nickelodeon's "Go, Diego, Go!" and smaller parts in bigscreen toons
"Everyone's Hero" and "The Ant Bully."
"David and Jake both bring an acting matu-

rity that's encouraged the rest of the cast to dig



deeper," says "Wizards" creator Todd Greenwald, who exec produces with Peter Murrieta. "David had a challenge, playing a nerd going head to head with a tough female character, and he just nailed that. And Jake brings a confidence to his character that really clicks with kids. They love his 'you can try new things and not care what others think' attitude."

— Iain Blair

SHAILENE WOODLEY

Teenage 'Secret' keeper

t's one thing to be popular with her peers but Shailene Woodley, the 18-year-old star of ABC Family's "The Secret Life of the American Teenager," has received some of her most surprising feedback from parents.

"The show has opened up incredible avenues for them and their kids, and they watch it together," Woodley says. "I think a lot of families don't communicate. I grew up in an

Impact: Star of

"The Secret Life

of the American

Teenager," which

million viewers.

Next: "Another

pregnancy scare,

relationships that

wedding, a lot more

drama!" she prom-

ises for the show.

Causes: St. Jude

Children's Re-

search Hospital,

Elizabeth Glaser

Foundation and an

she's starting with

anti-bullying org

her mother.

Pediatric AIDS

break apart, a

averages some 3.2

open family; I think it creates open communication and creates less mistakes.'

Woodley's character, a 16-year-old who got pregnant the first time she had sex, deals with the stresses of being a new mom as well as the regular day-to-day

hassles of going to high school. "The success start-

ed right away. It was the kind of subject that started to come out in the public eye with 'Juno' and the Sarah Palin thing that ultimate ly tuned the audience in,' says Woodley, who is grateful for the opportunities the

show has given her, allowing her to meet 'amazing people" and become involved with charitable causes such as St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

"I feel I've become more worldly, especially because I was in a situation (with the St. Jude charity) meeting tons of kids who didn't know if they would survive another year. I live life from a positive standpoint to make sure you are there for other people, the way they are there for you," she says.

– Lisa Carroll



RYAN MURPHY 'Glee' club coach

hanks to his breakout Fox hit "Glee," Ryan Murphy not only has his finger on the pulse of the youth market — he has it firmly by the throat, so to speak. The exuberant song-and-dance comedy averages 8 million viewers a week (most in the highly desirable 18-49 demo) and has quickly gone from cult obsession to national phenom.

How does Murphy, who co-created the show with aspiring screenwriter Ian Brennan, do it? By cleverly combining the dramedy of his beloved but shortlived high school series "Popular" with the twisted adult snarkiness of "Nip/Tuck."

"He's a genius," says 19-year-old Chris Colfer, who plays gay fashionista Kurt. Of course, Colfer may be slightly biased, as Murphy created and then tailored the role especially for the Clovis, Calif.,

native. "It was the first thing I ever booked, and then to find out that Ryan had decided to get rid of another character so I could be in the show? That was the most surreal element of this whole amazing experience," he says.

The "show embryo," Colfer is the youngest in a cast of teen characters played mostly by mid-20s thesps (Cory Monteith and Mark Salling are both 27, Lea Michele is 24).

"I was literally in high school just last year, and coming from a high school experience that wasn't so great into a show and a character whose high school experience isn't so great — it makes the role easy for me," says Colfer, who calls himself "a huge fan" of Murphy's "Nip/Tuck." "I never had a teenage rebellion period — I just watched 'Nip/Tuck," he jokes.

Iain Blair

ducer went back to high school with "Glee." Next: Just wrapped production on Sony's "Eat Pray Love," starring Julia Roberts

Impact: The

"Popular"

exec pro-

DAWN OSTROFF: The CW chief has seen mixed ratings for the reboot of "Melrose Place," but "The Vampire Diaries" has been one of the season's big hits, and "Gossip Girl" is still going strong.

ROB SORCHER:

Chief content officer saw his Cartoon Network recently pick up its first live-action series, "Unnatural History."



JONAS BROTHERS: Their tour sold 1.5 million tickets, though the bigscreen 3-D tie-in barely scratched \$20 million. Seventeenear-old sib Nick plans to go solo in January.

JESSE MCCARTNEY: Remains busy in music, TV and film. Boarded skein "Greek" with a recurring role and reprises his part as Theodore in "Alvin and the Chip-

munks: The Squeakquel.'

TAYLOR SWIFT: Became the youngest person to win Entertainer of the Year at the Country Music Awards. Can be seen next in Garry Marshall's romantic comedy "Valentine's Day."



SOULJA BOY: His second album, iSouljaBoy, peaked at No. 5 on the Billboard Hip-Hop/R&B charts. Next album is due out next year.

and Javier

Bardem.

YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: CHANNELING TALENT

KEKE PALMER

Multitalent 'True' and through

he sky is the limit," Keke Palmer says of her career, "but I'm not up to the sky yet."

Still, as the success stories of 16-year-olds go, it's hard to do better. Palmer is the rare multitalent to act and sing for both Disney and Nickelodeon. Now in its

Impact: Her show "True Jackson, VP" nabbed the biggest audience for a liveaction series debut in Nickelodeon's history.

Next: An album for Interscope Records that Palmer intends to be R&B with Taylor Swift-style lyrics "girls can relate to."

Causes: Boys & Girls Club of America (see page A2). second season, her Nick show "True Jackson, VP" is second only to "iCarly" for the cabler.

When Nick offered Palmer her own series, she was already a respected film actress, having starred in "Akeelah and the Bee" and Tyler Perry's "Madea's Family Reunion," and Palmer questioned whether it was the right move.

"I didn't want to make it seem like I was less serious about movies, but I'm about to do an album with Interscope and my

parents thought it would be good to broaden my audience with kids. I am now so glad I did it," she says. "Execs watch the show with their kids and think of me for projects. They see I have a big fanbase, and it opens doors."

This year, Palmer launched her TV character's fashion line Mad Styles at Wal-mart — yet another upward step in her career — though the mogul-in-the-making insists her true goal is just to leave a lasting impres-



sion. "I would hope that I'd inspired young girls, that I'd changed music in some way, put a name for myself in the acting world," says Palmer, who ultimately wants people to think, "Wow, she can do this, she can do that, and she has a really good head on her shoulders."

— Tara McNamara

DAN BERENDSEN King of tweens

annah Montana: The Movie,"
"Wizards of Waverly Place:
The Movie," "The Cheetah
Girls: One World," "Cinderella
3: A Twist in Time." With a resume featuring dozens of such credits, Berendsen could be the most influential
screenwriter reaching kids today.

"I'm a product of that late-'70s to early-'80s time where you had 'The Brady Bunch' on TV and Steven Spielberg making movies like 'E.T.' and there was this kind of idealized suburban America where it was great to be a kid," Berendsen says. "So, when I'm writing, I'm coming from that background."

After more than 10 years of creating TV shows and films for kids, Berendsen believes constructing stories and characters for this younger audience means remembering what his own feelings were like when he was a teenager — that every experience feels like the first time because it is.

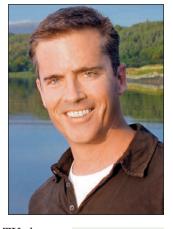
The writer also has a solid respect for his viewers and knows that if he doesn't hit the mark with them, they'll head to the lobby for some popcorn.

"The reason these shows and these movies are so popular right now is that they've stepped up and they're speaking directly to the audience (instead of) talking down to them," says Berendsen. "Kids know what they're watching and when someone is trying to fool them."

Still, Berendsen is quick to point out he's different from his high-profile characters.

"If I were cast in one of my movies, I would be 'High School Student No. 12' who stands left of the star," he says. "I never got to be the lead, so maybe in writing these stories there's some wish fulfillment."

— Karen Idelson



Impact: The top screenwriter for tweens, he wrote "Wizards of Waverly Place: The Movie" and "Hannah Montana: The Movie."

Next: Working on an adulttargeted pilot for ABC and "High School Musical 4: East Meets West."

Causes: GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network).

BILL HAYES Reality brood-caster

ill Hayes thinks of himself as "the anti-producer producer." The Figure 8 Prods. prexy doesn't believe in meddling with his subjects. His m.o.: "Let the subjects speak for themselves and focus

Impact: Exec produces several reality shows featuring families with multiple kids, including the wildly popular "Jon & Kate Plus Eight."

Next: A halfhour show about people who capture venomous snakes for Animal Planet.

Causes: Teaches as an adjunct professor at the U. of

North Carolina

on people who can be really emotionally honest so they draw the audience into their story."

That perspective has guided Hayes through such real-

ity shows as the wildly popular "Jon and Kate Plus 8," in which he let the Gosselins — parents and kids alike — express themselves without a narrator.

"It's a story people want to follow because they don't know what's going to happen next," Hayes says from his North Carolina home. "Kate is obviously very charismatic and relatable, but what's really disarming is that she's willing to be so honest about her problems. And the kids are always saying and doing things you don't expect."

Hayes is also responsible for bringing cameras into the homes of other large families, exec producing "Table for 12" and "18 Kids

and Counting" for TLC, as well as special-interest skeins such as "Little Parents, Big Pregnancy," about little people longing to be parents, and "Joined for Life," about conjoined twins.

"Family struggle is a good story because people love to see

"Family struggle is a good story because people love to see other people overcome their challenges," says Hayes.

– Karen Idelson



YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: CHANNELING TALENT



IEFF 'SWAMPY' MARSH & DAN POVENMIRE

Double-trouble toonsters

Impact: Their

"Phineas and

Ferb" was the

top-ranked toon

with tweens for

Next: "Phineas

and Ferb Christ-

Causes: The Itty

mas Vacation."

Bitty Art sale.

most of 2009.

he Disney Channel/Disney XD animated series "Phineas and Ferb' clicks with kids because there's a boyish believability to the antics of its titular not-quite-tween stepbrothers — an authenticity reinforced by the use of young thesps in key roles. Teenagers Vincent Martella (who voices Phineas) and Thomas Sangster (Ferb) aren't far removed from the age of their characters.

The toon has tapped the well of Mouse House talent by enlisting "High School Musical's" Ashley Tisdale as well as "Hannah Montana's" Mitchel Musso and Moises Arias and "Camp Rock's" Alyson Stoner for semi-regular roles. The show's growth in the past year has made it a hot ticket for guest stars ranging from Malcolm McDowell to Jack McBrayer.

Episodes are built around the brothers wild adventures (such as trying to build a

NASCAR track in their backyard) and those of their pet platypus, Perry, who leads a double life as a secret agent. But creators Dan Poven-

mire and Jeff "Swampy" Marsh take great pride in grounding the show in contemporary reality by depicting a blended family with no fanfare or 'very special episode" messages.

"Once we got the idea for this show we believed in it so much,' Povenmire says, noting that it took them 16 years to find a buyer.

The exec who finally told them "yes" says he was sold on the way Povenmire and Marsh emphasized that the title characters were dreamers, not miscreants.

"It's a humor built on optimism and hope, not negativity and nastiness," says Disney Channel Worldwide entertainment prexy Gary Marsh (no relation to Jeff Marsh).

- Cynthia Littleton

PAUL LEE & KATE JUERGENS Putting ABC Family first

ith "10 Things I Hate About You," "Greek," "Lincoln Heights," "The Secret Life of the American Teenager' and "Make It or Break It," Paul Lee and Kate Juergens have managed to keep ABC Family teen-friendly while confronting major issues.

'Teen pregnancy, drinking, drugs — we deal with issues that are very real, but we always do so responsibly and optimistically," says Lee, the cabler's president. "At the end, these families will always

come together to resolve those problems, even if their lives are spinning out of control.'

Thanks to this programming philosophy, ABC Family has become the No. 1 basic cable network in primetime among female viewers 12-17 and 12-34. In the third quarter of 2009, it advanced to No. 9 in overall audience.

Juergens, the exec VP of programming and development who came to work with Lee two months after his April 2004 hiring, notes that with the rise in viewer confidence in ABC Family, the network has been able to make bolder

According to Juergens, "We are able to take on things that might seem a little riskier than we could do a few years ago when we were just getting started.'

In turn, ABC Family has ever greater trust that its viewers will give them a fair shake.

The thing we know about this generation, they really have an amazing antenna for what is real and what is fake," Lee says. "And if it's not real, they literally will be telling us immediately."



Impact: Successful launches of "Make It or Break It" and "10 Things I Hate About You," contributing to a fifth straight year of network ratings growth.

Next: Three pilots, including a Joey Lawrence/Melissa Joan Hart starrer, are competing for what's expected to be two series slots on the 2010 slate. Causes: "Greek" Pledge Yourself to Do Something; national PSA for Boys & Girls Clubs of America with members of "Lin-

coln Heights" cast.

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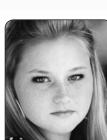
Mackenzie



Alaina

Makhlouf

Lucas Stephan



Amanda Rougeaux



Corey Hegel



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Ally

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Jonah

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YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: YOUNG AT CHART

DEMI LOVATO Singer's 'Sonny' forecast

nce the Disney Channel gets behind a young multitalent, chart-topping success seldom comes as a surprise. But in the case of Demi Lovato, the music and acting career she's enjoying was hardly handed to her.

Singing since age 5, Lovato and her sisters needed a skill for the talent portion of the pageants in which they competed at a young age. "I loved to sing, so that's when I started taking lessons and really practicing," Lovato explains.

Studying under vocal coach Linda Septien in Dallas, Lovato learned how to write songs and play instruments, but she also used the opportunity to soak up advice on "making it in the music business,"

ny's music department. When I first heard her, I was

begging to work with her," says Steven Vincent, VP of music and soundtracks.

Lovato went on to perform in "Jonas Brothers: The 3D Concert Experience" and release two hit CDs, "Don't Forget," and "Here We Go Again," culminating in a popular concert tour of her own last summer. The star of Disney Channel's 'Sonny With a Chance," Lovato also co-starred with the Jonases in "Camp Rock" and Selena Gomez in "Princess Protection Program.

'She's got unlimited potential. She can sing and she's funny — it's rare to find that kind of combination," Vincent says. "I think she will become a major artist like Pink or Impact: The Disney chanteuse's two CDs debuted at Nos. 1 and 2.

Next: Working on another album; just finished filming "Camp Rock 2: The Final Jam"

Causes: Partnered with the Pacer Center in Minnesota to launch teensagainstbullying. org; involved with Disney's Friends for Change: Project Green.





JORDIN SPARKS

'Idol' ideal

est winner -

busy concert-

giver - had a

this summer.

second hit album

Next: Performing

on the Jingle Ball

Tour this month.

Causes: Member

of the President's

Participation. Her

upcoming third

concert benefits

M.A.D. (Making a

annual Super

Bowl charity

Difference).

Council on Ser-

vice and Civic

Impact: "Ameri-

can Idol's" young-

inning a music pageant may be a great way to launch your singing career, but as Jordin Sparks understands, the hard part begins once you leave the "American Idol" set.

"On 'Idol,' you have to be prepared every week and understand that people are watching and judging you," Sparks says. "I carry those lessons (with me) every day."

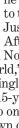
She hustled out a self-titled first album just four weeks after becoming the youngest "Idol" winner (she was 17 at the time), selling 1.6 million copies worldwide and snagging both a Grammy nod and an American Music Award in the adult contempo category.

Then she identified top producers she wanted to work with and spent four months preparing her soph album. "Battlefield" debuted in July, earning praise

for tracks showcasing the dramatic R&B-pop range that made Sparks a fave on "Idol." Two of the singles — the title track and Sparks' Shannon cover "S.O.S. (Let the Music Play)" — made the Billboard top 10.

She allied herself with other hot acts on stage, opening for the Jonas Brothers in May and Britney Spears in August — a smart way to reach her tween-plus demo head-on (though having Kevin Jonas, as her handler can't hurt).

- Anthony D'Alessandro



JUSTIN BIEBER Tuned into YouTube

ne of the very first Internet sensations to translate into a genuine pop star, Justin Bieber is having quite the year. After nabbing 80 million views on You-Tube, on Nov. 17 he released his debut album, "My World," which charted a record-setting four Top 40 singles before the CD was even in stores.

The 15-year-old Canadian began his venture into online stardom three years ago in his hometown of Stratford, Ontario.

"When I was 12 years old, I was in a local singing competition, and my friends and family that weren't there wanted to see me, so I posted videos of the competition on YouTube. They ended up just getting bigger and bigger, and I kept posting more and more," he tells Variety.

Bieber uploaded videos of himself sing

ing songs by artists such as Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Justin Timberlake and Usher. Oddly enough, it was Usher who ended up getting Bieber signed to his label. When Scooter Braun, a former marketing exec at So So Def, discovered Bieber's videos, he took him to Atlanta to meet Usher, who arranged to have him signed with Island Records.

"It's been crazy, crazy crazy," Bieber says of his experience since. "But it's been fun. My mom's been with me since day one, and we make sure I still have time to play sports and hang out with my friends."

Busy promoting his album, the singer just tapped a second appearance on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" and opened for Taylor Swift on two stops of her "Fearless" tour.

Impact: With four of his songs already online hits, the singer released debut album "My World." Interest spiked after he appeared on "Ellen."

Next: "Ten years from now, I'd love to be doing some acting and maybe even have won a Grammy," Bieber

STEVEN VINCENT: Saw the third installment of "High School Musical" hit big at B.O. and on the music charts.



DOUG COHN: The Nick senior VP of music marketing and talent partnered with Sony to produce two upcoming 2010 skeins, boy band tuner "Big Time Rush" and Victoria Justice starrer "Victorious."

DANIEL RADCLIFFE: Continues to resist Harry Potter typecasting by toplining the Broadway tuner "How to Succeed in **Business Without** Really Trying.



ABBY BLUESTONE:

Client Nina Dobrev's TV skein "Vampire Diaries" was a runaway hit. Amanda Seyfried's slate continues to grow with upcoming roles in "Dear John" and "Marmaduke."

WENDI GREEN: Her client

Angus T. Jones' skein "Two and a Half Men' continues to pull impressive ratings on CBS.



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YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: PRIMO PERCENTERS



SCOTT WINE

Teen media trainer

've always been into building careers," says Scott Wine, who's spent more years coaching young clients (15) than most of them have been alive. "I feel like I have magic dust and get to sprinkle it on the right people.'

A partner at the Osbrink Agency, Wine and co-owner Cindy Osbrink are

Impact: Helped Dakota Fanning court teen auds with "New Moon," while advising others on how to handle press opps.

Next: Keep an eye on clients Chloe Bridges ("Camp Rock 2") and Josie Loren ("Make It or Break It").

Causes: The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, "I've done nine triathlons in the past two years and raised over \$20,000 for blood cancer.'

known for taking a managerial approach to their clients, who include Dakota and Elle Fanning, "Hannah Montana" breakout Lucas Till and "Everybody Hates Chris" star Tyler James Williams. In the past year, Wine has also added publicity to his roster of responsibilities.

"Cindy came up with the idea that we needed to teach these kids how to address the press without coming off as know-it-alls.

not come off as shy, not give one-word answers," he says. "Nobody was doing it, because kids weren't cool enough for the big PR agencies.'

Wine, who sits in on nearly every press day and photo shoot, says he encourages his clients to be responsible in how they present themselves, espe-

cially in a celebrity-obsessed culture.
"The vast majority of these kids are prodigies," he says. "You can't talk down to them, but you also can't be their best friend. You have to guide them and be a role model."

- Sandie Angulo Chen

RYAN DALY & MELISSA HIRSCHENSON

Groom-for-improvement duo

atching the energy and enthusiasm of their young clients, Innovative Artists duo Ryan Daly and Melissa Hirschenson work as a team to break out teen and early-20s talent, whether as a film lead (Ashley Greene in Joel Silver-produced "The Apparition"), a TV principal (AnnaLynne McCord on "90210")

Impact: Daly reps six "New Moon" cast members; Hirschenson handles "90210" star AnnaLynne McCord.

Next: Each has a proven knack for spotting talent; the challenge remains finding the right

Causes: Both help facilitate their clients' philanthropic efforts. Hirschenson works closely on the Blind Project with McCord.

or series regular (Joshua Moore on "Desperate Housewives"). No matter the client, the goal remains the same: Ensure career longevity by ultimately transitioning them to adult roles.

Though they once shared an office as part of a separate "breakout department," the two agents are now fully integrated within Innovative Artists Both have had major successes spotting and developing unknowns: Hirschenson met McCord in a Miami casting session when the thesp was 15; Daly signed Greene at a talent search convention when she was 17.

Daly, who advanced to agenting after working up the assistant ranks, strives to maintain perspective for his clients. "I try to keep them humble," he says. "I don't want to contribute to the machine that creates egotistical actors.'

Hirschenson (who is also a lawyer) has helped a number of models make the transition to acting. Most recently, she placed Josh Pence in "The Social Network." Her younger clients include Kathryn Newton, 11, of "Gary Unmarried" and Bella Thorne, who joins the cast of HBO's "Big Love" next season. After developing and nurturing minors' careers for more than a decade, both also can cope with stage parents, knowing how to spot the difficult ones and partner with those who get it.

- Kathy A. McDonald



JENNIFER PATREDIS Lone Star scout

surprising number of teen stars hail from Texas, and no small number of them — including Demi Lovato, Selena Gomez, Mitchel Musso, Johnny Simmons, Hunter Parrish, Kenny Baumann, Madison Pettis and Debby Ryan — have agent Jennifer Patredis to thank for getting their start in Hollywood.

The equation works both ways, actually, as it was Patredis' eye for such kids that motivated the Dallas-born tenpercenter's own move to Los Angeles, where she now works at CESD. Patredis began her career as an assistant at the Kim Dawson Agency in Dallas, where owner Lisa Dawson "took a chance on me and let me bring my own

approach to the position," she says.

When the company's kid rep left abruptly, Patredis accepted the position, not realizing she'd have to earn the respect of skeptical parents who weren't sure about trusting a 22-yearold agent. "One mom wouldn't even put my name on her kid's resume at the



Impact: Her track record with Texas talent brought Patredis to CESD in L.A.

Next: Logan Miller landed Disney XD's "I'm in the Band," Logan Henderson joins Nick's "Big Time Rush" and Brandon Tyler Russell booked indie film "Smitty."

Causes: Vital Voices, a human rights org which turns the oppression of women into opportunities for them.

start," she remembers. That mom was local acting coach Cathryn Sullivan, "who oddly enough contributed the most to my success, as we worked together developing talent such as Demi Lovato and Selena Gomez," whom Patredis booked on their first pilots.

And though her eight-year tenure in Dallas came to an end last year when CESD beckoned, Patredis still scouts talent back in Texas. Mitchell Gossett, who headhunted Patredis (and now works at UTA), calls her "a kindred spirit who deserved a chance to play in the big leagues." - Iain Blair

NICK STYNE: It's been a big year for clients Selena Gomez and the Jonas Brothers. 2010 looks good for thesp Noah Ringer, who stars in "The Last Airbender."

THOR BRADWELL:

Managed to keep Taylor Lautner in "New Moon." Clients Nicola Peltz and Seychelle Gabriel booked work in "The Last Airbender.'

JASON WEINBERG:

The agent helped line up image-expanding roles for Blake Lively and Vanessa Hudgens (Zack Snyder's "Sucker Punch").

RYAN SHECKLER: The skateboarding star crosses over to film in "The Tooth Fairy" with Dwayne

BO BURNHAM: Released self-titled album in March, which he is promoting via his "Fake I.D. Tour." Judd Apatow gave him a cameo in "Funny People."

MEGAN FOX: "Transformers 2" ruled the B.O., while her titular turn in "Jennifer's Body" earned less than \$20 million.

BLAKE LIVELY: The "Gossip Girl" star is shooting Bostonbased thriller "The Town" with director Ben Affleck

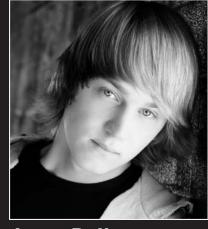
Justin Kroll

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The Savage Agency



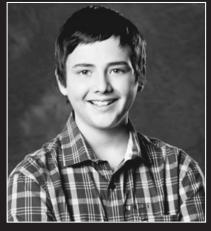
Shailene WoodleyThe Secret Life Of An American Teen (ABC Family)



Jason Dolley
Good Luck Charlie - Cory In The House
(Disney Channel)



Ayla Kell Make It Or Break It (ABC Family)



Ryan Malgarini Gary Unmarried (CBS)



Ciara Bravo Big Time Rush (Nickeloden)



Zach Mills Rita Rocks, Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium



Isaiah Montgomery Men Of A Certain Age (TNT)



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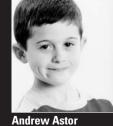
Taylor Gray



Bryan Carig
The Untitled Michael Jacobs Project



Perry Mattfeld



Santa Buddies, The Hangover, Criminal Minds, ER, Saving Grace



Isabella Astor
Racer Kids, The Huntleigh Files,
Bad Bunny



Cora Lakey Grease (Sandy), Wizard Of OZ, (Dorothy)



Jeff Braine
Comcast, Adventures Of Food Boy,
Begarding Beauregard



Misha Huang



Shawn Huang ABC Promo, Chuck, Little Big Me



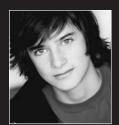
Sophia Linkletter She's A Fox, Fosca/Opera,



Keegan Boos



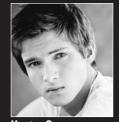
Tyler Poulsen
Once Upon A Mattress, Americal Idol (middle school theater)



Ryan Ballance Maytag (Commercial)



Rachael Marie
House, Janet Saves The Planet,
The Middle



Hunter Gomez Ghost Whisperer, The Family G Suite Life Of Zack And Cody



Benjamin Bryan New Adventures Of Old Christin



Kelly Heyer



Avery Larson
Thomas' English Muffins,
Travelenity



Mackenzie Larson Renault Cars, Crestor 2



Molly Ryan
How The Grinch Stole Christma



Lindsay Ryan
How The Grinch Stole Christmas



Kaleigh Ryan Heroes, Road To The Altar



Haven Hill Moxie Girl



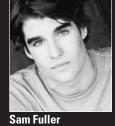
Bobbie Prewitt



Sydney Gough
Dinosaur Train, Thoroughly
Modern Millie, Mamma Mia



Jordan Van Vranken Men Of A Certain Age, InCybers, Calling All Angels



The Staring Contest, Bill Of Rights, Taking A Shot At Love



Dylan CrowleyUninvited Guest With Bill Devlin,
The Canbees, Stronger Than Daylig



Jenna Stone
Controlling Howie, Stiches And
Bleach, My Own Private Idaho



Gary Unmarried, Private Practic



Michael William Arnold
How The Grinch Stole Christmas,
The Middle, Spork



Mason Hsieh Superdude, Motorola, Terminal Man



Ryan Wynott Flash Forward (ABC)



Kylee Benesh



Michael Yallourakis



Stephanie Yallourakis



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YOUTH IMPACT REPORT: STAGE & WEB

THE 'BILLY ELLIOT' BOYS Kiril Kulish, Trent Kowalik and David Alvarez

o many actors actually want that thing, and I got it after only a year," marvels David Alvarez of his Tony Award. Yeah, rub it in, kid. Fifteen-year-old Alvarez (a trained bal-

 \bigoplus

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2009

let dancer before he went legit) was one of the three original actors to play the lead in "Billy Elliot" on Broadway, and in June he and fellow Billys — Trent Kowalik and Kiril Kulish — shared the best actor trophy for their turns in the demanding role, which is

rotated among a team of young thesps.

An English boy who's just gotta dance despite the limitations of his working-class environs, Billy would be a Herculean part even for an adult, with almost three hours of near-constant stage time that includes singing, dancing and acting (not to mention speaking in an authentic-sounding Northern English accent).

The original trio trained for close to a year to appear in the show, and adult thesp Gregory Jbara, who portrays Billy's father, remains impressed.

"The physical demands of that role are awe-inspiring, and when they muscle through

best actor in the title role of tuner "Billy Elliot."

Next: Two continue in "Billy" until they outgrow the part, while Kulish tries "The Nutcracker."

Causes: Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

it, it's kind of miraculous," he says. "When you see the simplicity and the unconditional discipline they show, it helps clear the ampout of your see the simplicity and the unconditional discipline they show, it helps clear the crap out of your own perspective.

One of the tragedies of the role, of course, is that the adolescent actors can't play it for long, before their voices change. Kulish has already moved on, and while neither Alvarez nor Kowalik has a definite date of departure,

both know their exit is nearing.

"I don't have a lot of time left," Alvarez says. "I'm getting really old."

- Gordon Cox



LUCAS CRUIKSHANK Web's 'Fred' head

or as long as I can remember, I've always been creating characters and making random videos with my mom's old camera," 16-year-old Lucas Cruikshank tells Variety. "Even before YouTube started, me and

my family would just make random videos.' Then YouTube came along, and Cruikshank started posting them.

'I didn't really understand YouTube at the time," he says. "I didn't know that millions of people could watch your video. I just thought that the friends I sent it to could watch it. So I was really surprised when I posted 'Fred' and it

totally blew up."

That would be Fred Figglehorn, a fictional young character Cruikshank began creating videos about. He posted the first one in 2006, and by April, the "Fred" channel had more than 1 million subscribers, making it the first YouTube channel to hit that mark. By this point, Cruikshank had added dozens of other characters — all played by himself — to the "Fred universe."

Given the enormous appeal of

Cruikshank's self-made celebrity with young auds, industryites have been quick to ally themselves with the phenomenon. Nickelodeon invited Cruikshank to appear on an episode of "iCarly"

(as both Fred and himself),

Walden Media hired him to promote the film "City of Ember" in "Fred" episodes, and, most recently, the "Fred" character was optioned for a featurelength film.

"It's the first thing to go from the Internet to the movies, which is crazy," Cruikshank says of the indie film, which is in

film based on the character. production for a 2010 release. "The movie is going to take the character to

Impact: In spring,

"Fred Figglehorn"

the first YouTube

channel to crack 1

million subscribers.

Next: Cruikshank

is taking "Fred" to

a whole new level with the produc-

tion of a feature

webisodes became

his series of

a whole other level." Beyond "Fred," Cruikshank said his dream is to become a Hollywood triple threat. "I'd love to be an actorwriter-director," he says. "Kinda like Tyler Perry." - Peter Knegt

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Meet the stars of 2010's hot projects — young talents poised to make an impact in the coming year

JIMMY BENNETT

hough only 13 years old, Jimmy Bennett already has some 35 acting credits to his name, ranging from guest appearances on "Gilmore Girls" and "CSI" to considerable roles in 2006's "Poseidon" and 2007's "Evan Almighty."

When Tim McCanlies, director of the upcoming "Alabama Moon," came across Bennett as a possibility for the lead part in his film, he was shocked at how much experi-

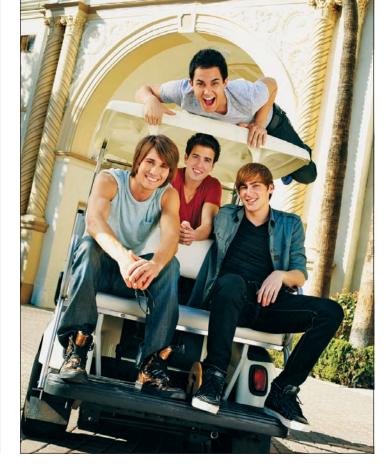
ence Bennett had. "You don't see many kids out there with resumes like Jimmy's," he says.

In the past year, Bennett has scored some major additions to that resume — from playing Michelle Monaghan's son in indie "Trucker" to nabbing the lead in Robert Rodriguez's "Shorts" to, most notably, taking on the role of young Captain Kirk in "Star Trek."

Bennett already has a few films on tap for 2010: "Stolen Lives," a thriller where he plays

opposite Jon Hamm and Josh Lucas; "Bones," an indie about four teens growing up in 1989 New York; and "Alabama Moon," based on Watt Key's novel.

'So many actors that age in L.A. are these modern kids, but Jimmy has this old-fashioned, Huck Finnesque way about him. He's just such an old soul," McCanlies says. Peter Knegt



'BIG TIME RUSH'

ssembling a hit boy band is tough enough. Small wonder that it took 18 months and a nationwide search to find four teen guys who could not only sing but also act for Nickelodeon's new comedy series "Big Time Rush," about a group of wannabe pop stars who get the chance to make it big in the Los Angeles music scene.

'We didn't want four kids who looked alike," says Nick exec VP of original programming and development Marjorie Cohn. "Each one brought some of their personality to the table, which in turn inspired (creator) Scott (Fellows).'

The cast consists of Kansas-born lead singer Kendall Schmidt, "Making Menudo" finalist Carlos Pena, East Coast transplant James Maslow and relative newcomer Logan Henderson ("Friday Night Lights"). "When we saw these four together, it all just clicked," she adds.

Cohn believes the show (which previewed last week after "iCarly" and launches in early 2010, featuring music from Columbia/Epic) taps into the "American Idol" zeitgeist of wish fulfillment and beating the odds. "We think kids and tweens will really relate to the boys and a really funny take on what happens the day after all your dreams come true. It's classic Nickelodeon."

- Iain Blair



JASON DERULO

t 20, singer-songwriter Jason Derulo is anything but a tenderfoot, having penned lyrics since his teen years for such hip-hop artists as Lil Wayne and Danity Kane. Though several labels had tried to woo Derulo after being intrigued by the wunderkind rep he was building in the Miami music scene and on his MySpace page, it was L.A. producer J.R. Rotem who succeeded in bringing him in for a recording session.

The duo clicked creatively, leading to a job writing for another of Rotem's proteges, Sean Kingston, and an offer to launch Derulo's solo career. His first single, "Whatcha Say," flips Imogen

Heap's electronic-vocal "Hide and Seek," fusing a love ballad with house music. Inspired by his brother's relationship, the track chronicles a man's fallout with his soulmate after he cheats on her.

"People go through this every day, where they mess up and beg for their love back," Derulo says of "Whatcha Say's" wide appeal — the song recently notched the top spot on the Billboard Hot 100 after 12 weeks, with 1.7 million copies sold.

Opening for Lady Gaga on her tour, Derulo plans to release his self-titled debut album in March and will appear in the MTV doc "Turn - Anthony D'Alessandro the Beat Around.





SAMMI HANRATTY

ut of the blue, 2-year-old Sammi Hanratty told her mother she wanted to be on TV. A year went by and she wouldn't let up, so her mother got the name of an agent and set up a meeting. She booked her first job the next day.

Eleven years later, Hanratty has starred in Pringles commercials, had a recurring role on Disney's "The Suite Life of Zack and Cody" and "Pushing Daisies," starred alongside her sister Danielle in "The Unit" and voiced three characters for "Disney's A Christmas Carol."

Now she is starring alongside Kris Kristofferson in "The Greening of Whitney Brown," which just wrapped and is slated for a spring 2010 release. She has four other films coming out in the next year, including the Indiana Jones-style family adventure "The Lost Medallion: The Adventures of Billy Stone." In the case of "Whitney," she nailed the role after going up against actresses like Emily Osment, Isabelle Fuhrman ("Orphan") and Madeline Carroll ("Swing Vote").

Hanratty distinguishes herself with her focused attitude and constant energy — her colleagues describe her as a teen without the teen angst.

"After she wins her multiple Academy Awards, I hope she remembers me, because I would love to work with her again," says "Whitney" director Peter Odiorne.

— Jennifer Konerman



AARON JOHNSON



ackup plans are for wimps, says "Kick-Ass" star Aaron Johnson. "The moment you make your backup plan, you fall back on it," he warns. Ever since he began acting as a youngster in local theater productions, Johnson has thought of little else, building a modest profile with small roles in British TV and such films as "The Illusionist," Sundance selection "The Greatest" and the U.K. teen hit "Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging."

That should change with Lionsgate's "Kick-Ass," in which Johnson plays a teen who discovers that becoming a superhero

is more painful than you'd think in the real world, followed by a turn as the young John Lennon in "Nowhere Boy." Wrapping his head around these disparate roles in a relatively short span wasn't easy, Johnson says. "I auditioned halfway through 'Kick-Ass' where I was playing this nerdy, comicbook sort of role with an American accent. During breaks I'd go back to the room and go on YouTube picking up clips of John Lennon and trying to learn his accent and how he talks."

Johnson has also wrapped the indie thriller "Chatroom" from "Ringu" director Hideo Nakata.

— Gregory Ellwood

ELLIE KENDRICK

ou've probably already seen up-andcomer Ellie Kendrick on the bigscreen, though you may not have realized it. The 19-year-old Brit played Tina, one of Carey Mulligan's school friends in "An Education." But it's the title role in the "The Diary of Anne Frank," a BBC five-parter set to debut stateside in April

on PBS, that should catch the industry's attention.

According to Kendrick, playing Anne Frank came easily, but the offerment here.

Kendrick, playing Anne Frank came easily, but the aftermath made for a "weird experience." In the U.K., the entire miniseries was broadcast five nights in a

row. "I'd go on the train, and people would ask me if I played Anne. That was really strange," she says.

As a youngster, Kendrick went to an all-girls school, where she was often cast in boy roles, such as the Artful Dodger in "Oliver!" Before long, she'd landed an agent and was going out for professional work on the stage and screen, landing the female lead in a Shakespeare's Globe Theater production of "Romeo and Juliet" last summer.

Though Kendrick is now studying English in her first semester at Cambridge, she hopes to continue her acting career, noting, "I think I still have a long way to go, but I'm up for it."

— Gregory Ellwood



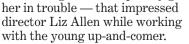






JOEY KING

or actress Joey King, age 10, playing beloved kidlit character Ramona Quimby opposite Selena Gomez in "Ramona and Beezus" had less to do with acting than simply feeling the role. It was King's intuitive approach to the character — a misunderstood girl whose overactive imagination frequently gets



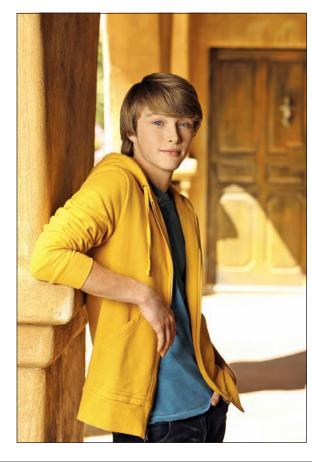
"She's so honest. Her performance hasn't built up any barriers," Allen says of King, who has racked up more than 15 film and television credits over the past three years. "Some adults get intimidated because she's so raw and real. I truly believe she can do anything," Allen continues. "She's only 10 and can improv, do any accent and cry completely on cue."

After starting her career in commercials at just 4 years old, King

experimented with a variety of different roles, from guest spots on television (including "CSI" and "Entourage") to animated features (she played a beaver girl in "Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs" and a baby yak in "Horton Hears a Who").

King follows her turn in "Ramona and Beezus" with the UFOstandoff thriller "Battle: Los Angeles," set for release in 2011.

- Lisa Engelbrektson



STERLING KNIGHT

rowing up a self-proclaimed "theater kid" in Houston, Sterling Knight didn't always think he'd become a paid actor. "I was just doing it for fun, but then one day I realized having the opportunity to do

something you love and get financially compensated for it is so rare, so I went for it,' says Knight, whose first job came in 2007 when he moved to Los Angeles and landed a role in an episode of "Hannah Montana."

"It put me in debt," he recalls with a laugh. "They don't really pay guest stars much."

The gig actually paid for itself quickly, however. After a few more guest spots (on "The Closer" and "Grey's Anatomy"), Knight landed the role of Demi Lovato's love interest in the Disney series "Sonny With a Chance" and Zac Efron's son in bigscreen comedy "17 Again."

"I've really relished the fact that I'm learning so much," Knight says. "I've been so lucky to work with such gracious and intelligent people who have put up with my naivete.'

Next up for Knight are a starring role in Disney Channel movie "Starstruck," which will air around Valentine's Day, and another season of "Sonny."

— Peter Knegt



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JENNIFER LAWRENCE

ennifer Lawrence always wanted to be a doctor. Luckily for Hollywood "and maybe also the medical profession," she jokes — the Louisville, Ky., native quickly



abandoned that notion after being discovered on the streets of New York at the age of 14. "It was a complete fluke," she

recalls. "I was there for spring break with my mom, someone took my photo and suddenly all these agencies wanted to meet me." Auditioning and reading scripts "was like meeting my soulmate," she adds. "I knew I was destined to do this."

Her first break was "The Bill Engvall Show," but Lawrence really got noticed for playing a teen violated by her mother's pimp in "The Poker House," a tricky role that earned her kudos at the 2008 Los Angeles Film Fest. She followed that up with another powerful performance in "The Burning Plain," for which she won the Marcello Mastroianni Award at the Venice Festival.

Now 19 and based in Los Angeles, Lawrence recently wrapped "The Beaver" with Mel Gibson and Jodie Foster (who also directed). - Iain Blair

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BAILEE MADISON

en-year-old Bailee Madison doesn't remember her acting debut, which is excusable, since she was only 2 weeks old at the time. "My big break was 'Bridge to Terabithia,' but the first thing I did was an Office Depot commercial," the young actress says.

Since then, the vivacious Florida native has appeared in such varied fare as "Lonely Hearts," "Phoebe in Wonderland" and Nickelodeon's "Merry Christmas Drake and Josh.'

She can currently be seen playing a pivotal role in the Jim

* Celebrating Our 22nd Year!

Sheridan drama "Brothers" as Natalie Portman's daughter.

"Bailee is a true actress," Portman says. "She can switch from the smiling, sweet girl she is to the crying, disturbed character she's playing on 'Action!"

The much-in-demand Madison has four films out next year: "An Invisible Sign of My Own," "Betty Anne Waters," "Letters to God" ("based on a true story of a young boy's fight with cancer," she says) and the starring role in Guillermo del Toro's "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark."

– Iain Blair

LOGAN LERMAN

os Angeles native Logan Lerman began acting at age 5 and got his big break at 7 playing Mel Gibson's youngest son in "The Patriot." "It was my first movie, and I just wanted to get out of



school, jokes Lerman, who also appeared as the young version of Gibson's character in Nancy Meyers' "What

Women Want." "It's only when I hit 12 that I started to take it all seriously," admits the now-17-year-old thesp, who went on to book a title role in the WB drama series "Jack and Bobby."

Since then, Lerman has played significant supporting parts in "3:10 to Yuma" (as Christian Bale's son) and "The Number 23" ("Studying Jim Carrey up close and getting his advice is the best film school you could have," he says). Next up is a high-profile leading role in Fox's "Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief." Based on the bestselling book series, the Chris Columbus-directed film about a trouble-prone teen who discovers he's descended from a Greek god could become a "Harry Potter"-style franchise. "I signed to do three, so I'm hoping it'll do well," Lerman says. – Iain Řlair

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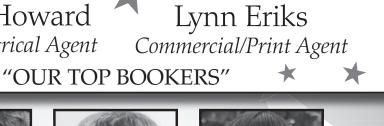
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Annie Fanelli



Joseph Lighthill



Shawn Sehra



Mark Fanelli







CHLOE GRACE MORETZ

hloe Grace Moretz wasn't the first in her family to pursue acting. In fact, it wasn't long after helping her older brother Trevor learn his lines for roles at New York's Professional Performing Arts School that Moretz started pestering her parents about letting her do it, too. Her mother finally relented, and by the age of 7, Moretz had landed her big break,

appearing in two episodes of 2004 TV series "The Guardian"

Five years later, Moretz has moved on to the bigscreen. appearing in such films as "500 Days of Summer" (as Joseph Gordon-Levitt's precocious kid sister) and "The Eye." Next year brings major roles in several movies. including kidlit adaptation

"Diary of a Wimpy Kid" and Nicolas Cage starrer "Kick-Ass" (she underwent martial arts and combat training to play Hit-Girl). Moretz is in New Mexico shooting the lead in "Let Me In," a remake of Swedish vampire tale "Let the Right One In."

Now there's no turning back, Moretz insists. "I get to be a different person every day. One day I can be a vampire, the other I can be Hit-Girl. It's like Halloween. I can do what I love — and act like a 3-year-old."

— Gregory Ellwood



or Jaden Smith, acting is a family affair. The 11-year-old son of Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith broke onto the scene in 2006 opposite his dad in "The Pursuit of Happyness." Earlier this year, he appeared in "The Day the Earth Stood Still" and landed the starring role in upcoming "Karate Kid" remake "Kung Fu Kid" opposite Jackie Chan.

JADEN SMITH

"Maybe because both his parents are actors, it's in his blood," says Chan, who plays the Mr. Miyagi role reinvented as a Chinese kung fu master. "I've seen actors who have trained for years and they don't have the 'feel' for acting. Jaden was probably just born to be a good actor."

Chan, who's worked with many children in his four-decade career, says Smith's lifelong ex-

tae kwon do club.

posure to his parents' work has taught him the discipline and instincts so important to acting.

"Will and Jada exposed him to the film world, and because he's such a smart kid, he picked up a lot by just observing," Chan says. "When I started working with him, I found that he was respectful, dedicated and a very hard worker. He also has a good sense of humor, so we had fun."

— Sandie Angulo Chen

NOAH RINGER

he Sixth Sense" director M. Night Shyamalan has a pretty good track record for launching child stars in his thrillers, but "The Last Airbender" (which bows next July) posed a special challenge since it was based on Nickelodeon's popular "Avatar" cartoon.

"Typically I'll find the actor and then mold the part to fit the child, but this was

a pre-existing character, and I had to hope that this person existed," Shyamalan tells *Variety*.

After conducting a yearlong worldwide search for a young martial artist to play Aang, the director came across a video from Dallas-based 12-year-old Noah Ringer, who'd heard about Paramount's open audition call through his



Touting a first-degree black belt and a proficiency with various Eastern weapons, Ringer not only bore an uncanny resemblance to Aang (complete with shaved head) but also impressed Shyamalan with his sincere gentleness — a characteristic the director felt was essential to play a monk who brings balance to a

warring world.

"Night wanted me to be natural," says Ringer whose first stab at acting came when prepping for the audition.
"He didn't want me to be Aang; rather, he wanted Aang to be me."

Looking forward to more acting roles, Ringer recently signed with CAA.

— Anthony D'Alessandro

CHI

ARIEL WINTER

hen Ariel Winter was 4, her parents found her hitting her head against the TV. "I was watching 'Dora the Explorer,' and I kept saying, 'Come on, let me in! I want to explore with Dora!'" recalls Winter, now 11 and a series regular on the ABC sitcom "Modern Family."

Winter's parents started her out in commercials and print to see whether it was the right fit, and before long, she was tackling film and television roles, including several animated blockbusters. "When I booked my first movie, 'Kiss Kiss Bang Bang,' I realized that's what I wanted to do with my life," she says.

Rather than taking acting classes, Winter approaches each role as a test of her imagination. "I like thinking, 'What would I feel if I were in that character's shoes?" she says.

With the thriller "Duress," the twist hinges on her character (spoiler alert), so Winter had to fool auds into thinking she was innocent until it's time to reveal her terrible secret. "I had to pull from my emotional bank, and I plucked out evil," says Winter, who will soon be seen taunting Eddie Murphy in "A Thousand Words" as well. — Peter Debruge

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Continued from page A1 and Rock Band. We create an environment where they can have fun with their colleagues and take it easy."

GROWING

Labors laws restrict kids' workdays, mandate that relaxation periods and breaks be built into the schedule, and require a certain amount of time pass between dismissal and callback. "On top of that, schooling has to take place during the week," Kaplan says.

It wasn't always this way. Angela Cartwright, who starred in the classic series "Lost in Space" as a teenager, says she and Bill Mumy were not given breaks: "None of that poufy stuff for us — we were in show business! We shot straight through, and we shot a lot more episodes, so there were only a couple months off."

Even during hiatus, Cartwright was tutored on the lot. "I only went to regular school the last quarter of my senior year, and you can imagine how easy that was trying to fit in," she remembers.

By contrast, when "Two and a Half Men" is on hiatus, star Angus T. Jones attends regular



LIFE AFTER DISNEY: Shia LaBeouf, left, took his time graduating from "Even Stevens" to non-Disney roles, while Hilary Duff may have set her career back by trying to break out too early.

high school and assumes the life of a typical teenager — even though the series has made him a millionaire at the age of 16. Similarly, 15-year-old Dakota Fanning attends high school between films and is a cheerleader.

"Balance is the answer to success everywhere," says Disney Channel Worldwide entertainment prexy Gary Marsh, recently appointed chief creative officer. "On an adult series, a young actor will be surrounded by adults. The circle of people around these kids on our series during their workday is their friends. On Disney Channel, the set is their playground."

"Here, you get to act like you're just a normal kid. We're all just kids going through the same stuff, and we can be in it together," says "Hannah Montana" star Miley Cyrus, crediting Disney with minimizing the boring, "work"-like aspect of the job. "We all have fun. You get to do stuff that you'd never get to do on a normal day."

Franchise stars also bear the added pressure of being responsible for the livelihoods

of castmates and crew. While "Roseanne" may have been able to replace Alicia Goranson with Sarah Chalke and not miss a beat, the entire "Hannah Montana" operation depends on Cyrus. Same goes for Jamie Lynn Spears, whose pregnancy forced "Zoey 101" to end production.

Knowing that restless actors can be franchise

busters, Disney encourages and facilitates its talent to pursue other creative avenues, such as Hilary Duff's music career (courtesy of Hollywood Records) and Raven Simone's clothing line, developed in conjunction with Disney Consumer Products.

The key is giving them the opportunity to build as big a career platform as possible, says Marsh, citing former Disney Channel star Shia LaBeouf ("Even Stevens"). "He stayed on the series and built a fanbase. Then he did an original Disney Channel movie called 'Tru Confessions' where he played a developmentally disabled twin. It was an unbelievable acting performance that to this day I

believe gave him the leverage and credibility to get a lot of other roles."

By contrast with Duff, whom Marsh feels left the Disney fold too early, LaBeouf bided his time in features, taking small roles in big movies like "Charlie's Angels" and "I, Robot." "He kept building his audience further to dimensionalize his appeal, so when he got 'Transformers' and 'Indiana Jones,' he brought along a built-in audience who will pay money to see him."

Young actors known for their film franchises, such as Zac Efron and Radcliffe, need to have similar strategies, says Marsh, noting, "If they are smart, they will be conscious about building their own brand at the same they are building the film franchise brand. It means they have to be smart about the other roles they do, whether it's a play (such as Radcliffe's turn in "Equus") or another movie or even how they conduct themselves in public."

Kaplan and Marsh agree that today's franchise stars are cognizant that what they do offscreen can affect their onscreen careers. "This generation is very serious about their work," Kaplan observes, "and they know professionalism can lead to success."



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Continued from page A1 scripted persona many young stars present to the world via social networks and services that foster a connection with their fans.

VIRTUAL

On MySpace or Facebook, not to mention a potentially alarming number of adults — can "friend" their favorite stars, keeping tabs on their activities via status updates or blog posts. Singersongwriter Josh Golden used MySpace to build his own brand. After getting a positive response to some scratch tracks he posted on the site, the 15-year-old musician kept feeding new material to his growing number of MySpace friends, which led to his being a finalist in Disney's Next Big Thing

contest. Among those who are already famous, most are too busy to manage their own online presence, with update duty falling to stage parents, publicists or an entire staff of Websavvy young marketers.

Twitter seems to be the favorite of Young Hollywood, making it easier to interact with fans by sending short messages from their cell phones. Their 140-characters-or-fewer missives can be programmed to pop up immediately on their websites, blogs and Facebook and MySpace pages, where they are often seen and "retweeted" by fan sites or teen magazines.

Getting the word out this way certainly has its advantages. When Nick Jonas fell ill while on tour, the Jonas Brothers tweeted that the show was canceled. Moments after a blogger gossiped that Demi Lovato

was dating Joe Jonas, Lovato squashed the rumor by tweeting an adamant denial. In another case, fans felt they were backstage with Taylor Swift when she tweeted three minutes before going on camera, "SNL is about to happen. Wow. I'm excited. And happy. And nervous. And excited. Watch?" (turning a savvy plug for her appearance into a candid-sounding update).

Maintaining an active newmedia presence is vital to an established performer like Miley Cyrus. "For someone who is so unapproachable to the everyday kid, how do we create this unique, lifelong bond?" asks Jason Gluck, president of Mileyworld.com. For Cyrus, the solution has been a Children's Online Privacy Protection Actcompliant social networking site that gives its 2 million unique visitors exclusive content. "We give the fans something extra in a safe environment because, in the end, one of the negatives is sharing too much information with young kids," Gluck says.

No one knows that better than Cyrus, who has unwittingly become the poster child for how new media can be useful as well as abused: Suggestive photos popping up on MySpace and Twitter, a YouTube video that was perceived to be making fun of other Disney Channel stars, and personal information on Twitter and blogs that became fodder for gossip mavens likely contributed to Cyrus being voted "Worst Celeb Influence" by AOL's tween site JSYK.com. "She's the most successful, has the most successful fan club has the biggest MySpace online community," Gluck says.

But because of that access,

he adds: "She is put at risk. That's just the cost of being the biggest star in the world."

Indeed, when it comes to those who do their own updating, publicists often coach their underage clients about how to protect themselves online. "If they're going to be on Twitter, I tell them to think twice before they hit 'send,'" says the Obrink Agency partner Scott Wine. "I don't want them to be sterile and have no personality, but they need to learn to keep certain things to their close-knit circle of family and friends." (When embarrassing information or photos do get online, it spreads fast and can be virtually impossible to control, as "High School Musical" star Vanessa Hudgens learned last year.)

The immediacy and availability of information about these high-profile minors concerns many. "I definitely think it's superdangerous. That's exactly why Miley left Twitter," says Jared Eng, the blogger behind teen site JustJaredJr.com. "Also, Twitter can create a flash mob (where local fans show up to catch a glimpse of a favorite star), and that can be dangerous if your following is of that magnitude."

Since kids are often savvy about new media and thus the ones pioneering the use of emerging technologies, "(The trick) is just trying to guide as much as you can, but part of embracing social media is giving up control," Ackermann says. "It's a new struggle yet a wonderful thing."



 $Continued from \ page \ A2$

"I remember one girl in particular who really touched my heart, named Ellen," recalls Power of Youth ambassador Madison Pettis. "At just 4 years old, she had the courage to sing beautifully in front of all of the people at the Power of Youth event last year, despite the fact that she had lost all her hair due to her cancer treatment."

The Power of Youth initiative was created to motivate young talent to become involved with philanthropic and humanitarian causes, and this year, five celebrities under the age of 25 will be honored for their individual activism and support with *Variety*'s Power of Youth @15 Award, presented by Best Buy.

"These are kids who don't just stick their faces on something; they are out there really working to try and effect change," says *Variety* publisher Brian Gott. "The whole idea of the Power of Youth is empowering young Hollywood to get involved, give back and get their fans to do the same."







Working with Variety mentors, the newsletter staff for Looking Ahead (a program dedicated to helping young performers transition to adult lives) guest-edited these stories about issues affecting their peers.

The pros & cons of stage parents

KIDS' CHOICE

never be pushed to be in front of the camera, asking young would-be to act. If their answer isn't convincing, it was probably the parents' idea.

When children act, stage parents can be their best advocate. While agents and managers are distracted with proactively try to find auditions and opportunities for their own kids.

ONE LIFE TO LIVE

Some stage parents seem to live through ing too hard or being budding young star loses

Young performers can sometimes be too focused, and good parents encourage them to balance their lives by

MONEY MATTERS

If a child's earnings ed, it can make their adulthood considerably more comfortable.

RIGHT ATTITUDE

happiness relies on their kids' success, it can put too much pressure on

Parents who show they're proud of and ove their children even if they aren't booking jobs.

HER ROLES AWAIT ORMER CHILD STAF

By PHILOMENA BANKSTON and CA'SHAWN SIMS

howbiz is one of the only businesses to hire children as professionals, but how many people can really be sure what they want to do with their lives at that age? And even if their minds are fixed, opportunities could dry up when their voice and body start to change.

"Puberty made that decision for me," says Jeff Cohen, who played Chunk in "The Goonies" and now works as a successful entertainment lawyer with Cohen & Gardner. His background helps him understand what actors need, and the new role allows him "to be an advocate for the rights of artists.'

While many young performers eventually leave the business, Cohen is just one example of others for whom the same passion that brings them to Los Angeles in the first place can steer them toward other careers in entertainment.

When Chris M. Allport (who voiced Tootles in Fox Kids' animated "Peter Pan and the Pirates" series as a teen) transitioned into producing, he didn't see it as a change in career, but an "addition." Though he still acts from time to time, Allport enjoys the independence of filmmaking (he recently finished "The Bilderberg Club," which premieres this month). Instead of chasing down work, he now has the power of making opportunities for himself.

For 21-year-old Chris Rossi, moving from acting to publicity was a natural step. "Everybody said, 'Chris, you're so great at interacting with people in the industry, it's like you naturally just do the PR thing," says Rossi, who decided



SECOND ACTS: Chris Rossi, with Bailee Madison at the "Brothers" premiere, moved from acting to publicity.

to open his own firm, Rossi Public Relations, in May of this last year mainly because he felt like with his own background in acting, he could better relate to what the actor wants and needs from their publicist.

Though many young performers focus entirely on acting, as these success stories show, other entertainment jobs await for those who keep an open mind - and they needn't take the place of acting either. For Rossi, his new career actually makes auditioning easier. "Because I work with these people now, if the right part comes up, they will say, 'Chris, come in for that," he says.

LITTLE 'ORPHAN' ISABELLE

Young actress shares advice on how she aced a grown-up role

By COSIMA CABRERA

rphan's" unmistakably creepy image of a curlyhaired brunette with ribbons around her neck and a uniquely morbid countenance is nothing like the effervescent actress who plays her, which might lead you to wonder how actress Isabelle Fuhrman. now 12 and distinctly mature for her age, was able to play a role that could have been emotionally dangerous for most children.

Following in the footsteps of "The Exorcist's" Linda Blair, Fuhrman worked hard to play an evil character with a dark secret. She acknowledges that at times the scenes were challenging, but that is precisely why she was interested in the part. Besides, Fuhrman insists, director Jaume Collet-Serra and the crew made sure the on-set experience was fun, not scary, for the actress and her kid co-stars, Jimmy Bennett and Aryana Engineer.

When asked what advice she has for other young performers cast in horror films, Fuhrman recommends, "Just try to be as crazy as possible and really leave yourself behind." Offscreen, Fuhrman is a genuine kid who has every Taylor Swift album, participates in Fun League sports at her school and is now writing a chick flick called "Days of December" with a friend for school. Unlike other kids, however, Fuhrman now receives fan mail and is eagerly anticipating her next role.

PAYING THEIR DUES: Auditioning is hard enough for adults. For teens it can be downright nerve-racking. I remember one casting director for whom I could never get my lines right when I auditioned. All my words would come out in a big garbled mess — embarrassing. Here

are a handful of insights from other young performers that might make the process easier for others. — Compiled by Tanner Richie, "Nip/Tuck"



"When I was 8. I had my first audition. I had just gotten my new stage name and was practicing it repeatedly. I was so nervous! When

I got into the room, I slated the wrong name. I had to talk with the casting director afterward and say, Excuse me, but I forgot my name in the audition."

- Ashley Ann-Michaels, "The Next Movie"



"On the set one time, I had to dress up in a tiger suit and wear

red blush on my cheeks. The suit was hot and I felt embarrassed to walk around anywhere!"

- Eric Don,

"Akeelah and the Bee"



"I've learned that if I don't get a part, it wasn't meant to be. Maybe I wasn't the right look or

height; it's nothing personal. I always remember that if I don't book a part, something better is on its way."

- Rebecca Knight, "The Bernie Mac Show"



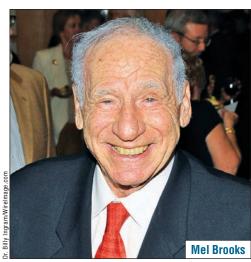
"It is impossible for any audition to be a 'failure.' Looking past the end result of getting the job

and just focusing on having fun with your work can make acting more rewarding than you could imagine."

- Tyler Neitzel,

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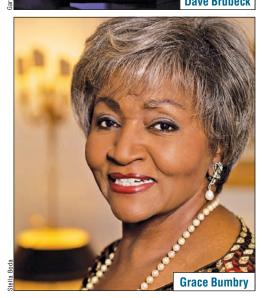
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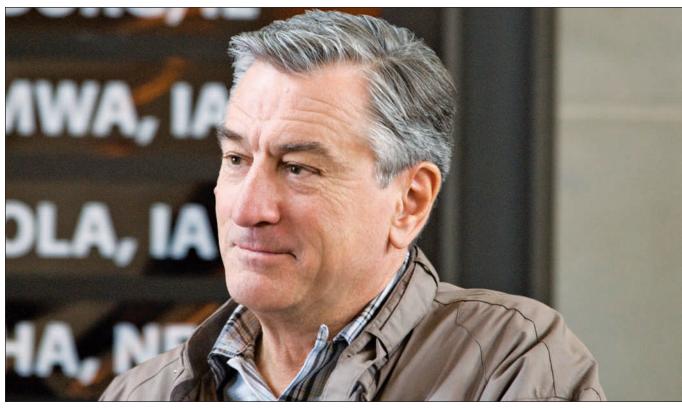




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D.C. FETES ARTS' BEST: Robert De Niro is being honored after making pics from "Taxi Driver" to "Everybody's Fine."

CULTURE CALLS: KUDOS ON THE POTOMAC

PERFORMERS NONPAREIL

This year's honorees include legends in jazz, rock, opera, acting and comedy

By DAVID MERMELSTEIN

he Kennedy Center Honors, our nation's highest cultural awards, place its annual recipients in an especially concentrated spotlight. Yet even if modesty forbids them from acknowl-

edging it, these figures are used to the limelight. Here the colleagues of this year's crop — movie actor Robert De Niro, writer-director Mel Brooks, rocker Bruce Springsteen, jazz legend Dave Brubeck and opera singer Grace Bumbry — make an attempt to describe the impossible: what makes them great.

Kirk Jones directed De Niro's most recent pic, "Everybody's Fine," and he regards the thesp as "the very greatest actor who ever lived," adding, "I don't think

that's an overstatement." The actor's secret? "I think that there's two things," says the helmer. "(The first is) the physicality to his face, which enables you to read everything that's going on in his head. Henry Braham, our cinematographer, said you could see everything he was feeling. There's something very special about the physicality, and the eyes.

"And as we know, screen acting is all about subtlety. He knows the power of underplaying a scene. He was born with the gift of a genius actor, but he was also born with physicality that helped convey those feelings."

Brooks' talent lies in shaping the

talent of others to convey his singular comic sense. "A lot of people are talented," says Gene Wilder, who collaborated with Brooks on three of the most beloved comedies of the past half century: "The Producers," "Blazing Saddles" and "Young Frankenstein." "Mel's humor is not

like other people's. He'll try things, and sometimes he misses, but then all of a sudden it's an avalanche. He and Zero Mostel were probably the most unique creators in comedy I've ever known. They had this special quality. Like a rocket ship going to the moon, they'd glance across absurdity. And when it connects, it's huge. It's a revelation."

Springsteen's achievement is synthesis — at least according to E Street Band guitarist Steven Van Zandt

("The Sopranos") and the rocker's friend since adolescence. "We weren't really sure where we were going, so we were learning each of the genres as we went," recalls Van Zandt. "And then Bruce takes that — the folk rock, country rock, jazz, British Invasion, girl groups — and uses it. Everything he ever heard, he uses. And yet somehow it always manages to be him, in his voice. He doesn't take a genre and then leave it behind, like a fashion. He actually absorbs them all. You can hear the influences, but his songs are uniquely him. It's always Bruce Springsteen music."

Brubeck is being celebrated as a

pianist, of course, but also as a composer, which is what bassist Christian McBride — a musical partner and friend of more than 10 years — considers his greatest achievement. "I've always thought the essence of him was in his compositions," he says. "There's a certain feel and sound to them, even the larger-scale works like the choral and ensemble pieces. But there's also the classic quartet, with Paul Desmond, and that has a signature sound, too." Yet it all comes back to the keyboard: "He has such a very lyrical sound. It's this nice hybrid of the European classical tradition, the stride-piano tradition and the modernism of Art Tatum."

ism of Art Tatum." Bumbry has also divided her talents, though in a most unusual way, distinguishing herself first as a mezzo-soprano and then a soprano on the world's great stages. She was also the first black singer to appear at Bayreuth, the German temple to all things Wagner. Soprano Martina Arroyo shared the stage with Bumbry many times, perhaps most memorably in "Aida" at the Metropolitan Opera. She says her colleague's devotion to character was especially intense. "You could feel it emanating from her," Arroyo says. "She always knew who she was. I recall a mesmerizing 'Salome' at Covent Garden. You could see in her face how she could manipulate Herod. And her Amneris seemed to be boring right through me at the Met in 'Aida.' On top of that, she had such a beautiful voice. Often singers have either intensity or a beautiful voice, but Grace had both.

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Tip Sheet

Annual Kennedy

Where: Kennedy

Center, Washing-

When: Sunday

Telecast: CBS,

Dec. 29, 9 p.m.

Web: kennedy-

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Center Honors

What: 32nd