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THE VANCOUVER SUN  
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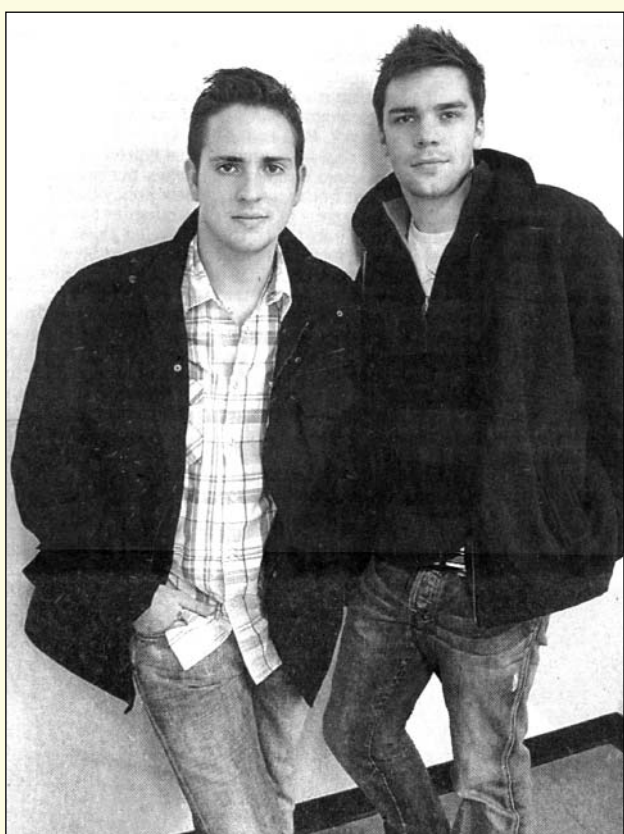
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RSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2006 BUSINESS

Sirens of high-def plan to project Canadian film, TV into digital age

MALCOLM PARRY VANCOUVER SUN  
TRADE TALK

DALE DREWERY and Gael MacLean, the High Def Consult firm principals, are determined to close what they say is a five-year lag between Canadian film and TV producers and their U.S. equivalents. The Japanese and some Europeans have an even longer lead, they say. Their subject is high-definition digital camera and post-production technology, which they say is rapidly becoming the standard for broadcasters. That's especially so in the U.S., where Drewery says 75 per cent of prime-time programming is either shot or mastered utilizing high-definition technology, and TV stations will stop transmitting analog signals in February 2009. Independent moviemakers are already capitalizing upon the system's convenience and economy, the self-styled "sirens of high definition" say. They also point to major feature films like *Babel*, *Miami Vice* and *Superman Returns* which have forsaken 35-mm film for high-def digital technology. Not that you can just switch cameras and immediately save as you shoot. "You have to know where you're going before you begin," says Drewery, who logged 16 years as a CBC television producer. Now independent, she recently directed 13 episodes of the *Take It Outside* series. According to MacLean, whose 20-year career has been as a sound designer for live and animated film and television, that means a project's post-production facilities must match the camera technology. Otherwise, she says, costly additional equipment and possibly operators will be needed. To avoid such snafus, and many more, the two have devised a power-point one-day workshop they say makes high-def highly comprehensible. They've presented it as far afield as Ottawa and Whitehorse, and say there's more coming. That would be a book titled *The Low Down on High Def: The Essential Guide to HD Production & Post*, which they'll self-publish in late spring. The notion for the book came when MacLean and Drewery attended what the latter says was "a very bad" HD workshop here in 2003. Discovering that existing literature was aimed solely at cinematographers, the two vowed to make HD as clear to production personnel. And not just technically. "It brings back the collaborative style of filmmaking," MacLean says, claiming that existing post-production methodology separates components such as a film's titles, graphics, colour-correction and special effects. "In high def, everything is done at the same time," Drewery says. But time may be getting short for Canadian producers and broadcasters. Says Drewery: "If you [the viewer] have a big HD television set and you're looking for HD content and can't find it in Canadian productions, you go to the U.S. So, if we want to sell our products and Canadian culture abroad, broadcasting in HD is very important." Thus, the Canuck conundrum. "Broadcasters say there's not enough content available for them to broadcast in HD," Drewery says. "But producers say: 'We're not going to produce in HD until you broadcasters start paying for it.'" It may take more than a 200-page book to resolve that. PETER BROWN, the Canaccord brokerage firm's founder-head, placed 27th in *Vancouver* magazine's annual Power 50 rating of influential folk. Awaiting the list's disclosure at a Vancouver Club reception recently, Brown



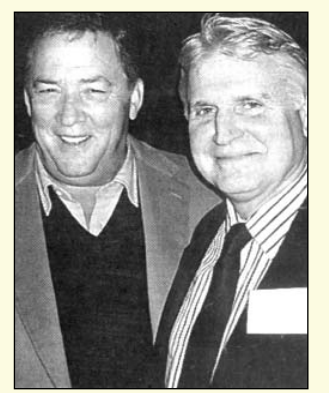
Matt Zien, 16, and Ryan Scholz, 22, have a \$500,000 movie in the can and its \$20-million sequel in mind.

powwowed with *The Vancouver Sun's* investment-biz columnist, David Baines. Momentarily coy about being photographed with the scourge of Howe Street, the super-broker said *so-to-voce*: "Baines, if you're on this [Power 50] list, the province is in trouble." Baines was then rated 25th. Other than brothers and Millennium Properties principals Peter and Shahrnam Malek, who placed 32nd, the only name-sharers on the Power 50 list were unrelated Robert (45th) and Thomas Fung (19th). The former, who is CEO of the Fairchild Group here, kept himself in the running for the 2007 list by declining an invitation to move to Hong Kong as major shareholder of a corporation with a market capitalization of \$3.5 billion. Salient Group president Robert Fung ain't going anywhere, either, other than to property-development locales outside the Gastown-Chinatown axis, where Salient made its mark.



Randy Zien

MATT ZIEN looks to be well ahead of the high-definition curve Drewery and MacLean are plotting. He's already written and directed the 25-minute movie *Class Savage* utilizing a technology called mega-def. The cameras involved were two early production versions of the Origin model developed by DALSA Digital Imaging, which is headquartered in Waterloo, Ont. The firm, which specializes in very-high-resolution digital-image capture, operates a semiconductor manufacturing plant in Bromont, Que., and has research-and-development facilities in the Netherlands and Colorado Springs, Co. The class in the bullying-themed film's title is at West Vancouver's private Collingwood school, where Zien, who'll be 17 in January, is a Grade 11 student. He might never see Grade 12 since the University of Southern California may accept him into a direct-entry program for bright youths wanting to kick-start their careers. The tall, bright Zien looks like a budding Howard Hughes. And though he doesn't have the multimillion-dollar resources of a tool company to fund his moviemaking resolution, dad Randy is the president-CEO of the Wesbild Holdings Ltd. development firm. Zien pere was also executive VP at Future Shop when Wesbild principal Hassan Khos-



Canaccord boss Peter Brown and Sun columnist David Baines chinwagged at Vancouver magazine's Power 50 do.



Consultant-authors Dale Drewery and Gael MacLean make high-definition moviemaking comprehensible to all.



Unrelated Fairchild and Salient firm heads Thomas Fung and Robert Fung made the Power 50 list.

movies are usually edited and printed. And when those biggies do check out *Class Savage*? Zien: "We'll say: 'You liked our film, eh?' Then we'll give them a script and say: 'Here's another.'" That will be for the feature-length comedy *Go Wild*, about high-school students at summer camp. Zien: "My friends and I see high-school movies and say: 'That's funny — maybe like high school was in 1994, when the director was there.' What we wanted to capture was the underbelly that's not there in those dreamy-teeny comedies." He also wants to capture \$20 million. Real money this time. DOREEN BRAVERMAN, who launched the Flag Shop chain of 13 stores in 1975, should fly a banner to signify dynastic succession. Daughter Susan has taken over as general manager, while red-right-through Liberal Braverman continues to handle advertising and franchise development. malcolm.parry@shaw.ca 604-929-8456

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