



**The Visual Effects Society (VES) Announces the  
2013 Board of Directors Officers  
*Jeffrey A. Okun Re-elected as Board Chair***

**Los Angeles, January 29, 2013** –The Visual Effects Society (VES) announced today the 2013 Board of Director officers, who were elected at the January 2013 board meeting. The list of officials includes Jeffrey A. Okun, Sr. V.P of visual effects for Prana Studios, who was re-elected for a fifth one-year term as Board Chair.

“To be elected the Chair of the VES is not only an honor but a responsibility to our artists to insure they are recognized for what they do,” said Okun. “The VES represents members in twenty-nine countries. These members are the artists that drive the industry to new heights, increase the ability to tell compelling stories, imagine new horizons and deliver the unimaginable. I will continue to shine the light and to look for new and better ways to have them recognized,” Okun added.

“I look forward to continuing to support the Board under the passionate leadership that Jeff brings to the table,” states Eric Roth, VES Executive Director. “He’s the kind of guy any nonprofit would be lucky to have leading them. And for visual effects artists around the world, they couldn’t be represented by anyone more dedicated or talented on their behalf,” said Roth.

**The 2013 Officers of the VES Board of Directors are:**

**Chair: Jeffrey A. Okun**

Jeffrey A. Okun has contributed visual effects design and execution to a wide-range of films including the award-winning sci-fi hit *Stargate* (1994), *Deep Blue Sea* (1999), *The Last Starfighter* (1984), *Sphere* (1998), *The Last Samurai* (2003), *Blood Diamond* (2006) and *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (2008).

Okun is known for creating 'organic' and invisible effects, as well as spectacular effects that seamlessly expand both the look and scope of a film, but also enhance the storytelling aspect of the movie. Additionally, Jeff is the creator of the revolutionary visual effects techniques dubbed the "PeriWinkle Effect" and the "Pencil Effect", which have been used in many projects to help achieve a sense of the fantastic and wonder on more accurate budgets. Okun is the author of breakdown, budgeting and tracking software currently being used by professionals throughout the industry.

### **1st Vice Chair: Michael Fink, Visual Effects Supervisor**

Michael has earned degrees from California State University Northridge, San Francisco Art Institute, and California Institute of the Arts, in an attempt to disguise a checkered past.

Michael began working in film on *China Syndrome* in 1977. He “cut his eye teeth” on films such as *Star Trek the Motion Picture* and *Blade Runner*, and became a Visual Effects Supervisor on *War Games* (BAFTA Nomination) in 1982. He has since worked on over 50 films, including *Buckaroo Banzai*, *Batman Returns* (BAFTA and Academy Nominations), *Braveheart*, *Mars Attacks!*, *X-Men*, *X-Men 2*, *Constantine*, *The Golden Compass* (BAFTA Award, Academy Award), *Tropic Thunder*, *Avatar*, *Tron: Legacy*, *Sucker Punch*, *Tree of Life*, and *Life of Pi*. Michael is a founding member of the Visual Effects Society, a member of the Executive Committee of the Visual Effects Branch of the Academy, and is a Visiting Professor at the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California while continuing his visual effects career.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair: Mike Chambers - Visual Effects Producer**

Mike Chambers is an independent Visual Effects Producer and freelance VFX Consultant, specializing in large-scale feature film productions. Most recently completing work on *The Dark Knight Rises* for Christopher Nolan and Warner Bros Studios, it is his second collaboration with the esteemed director of *Inception*.

With a professional career spanning 30 years, some of them pre-dating the "Digital Era", he has been both witness to and participant in the development, acceptance and widespread integration of digital technology and methodology into the VFX & film production industry.

As a VFX Producer, he has worked with many A-list producers & directors on numerous VFX-heavy feature films. Some of his production credits include *I Am Legend*, *Surrogates*, *10,000 BC*, *The Day After Tomorrow*, *Babe: Pig In The City*, *Strange Days* and *True Lies*. When available between productions, his consulting services are utilized by major studios and production companies. Clients include Paramount, Warner Bros, Disney/Touchstone, DreamWorks, Alcon Entertainment and Summit Entertainment.

Early in his career, Mike gained invaluable traditional filmmaking experience working for many seminal Hollywood figures and production companies. Roger Corman's New World Pictures, Doug Trumbull's Showscan and Richard Edlund's Boss Films were among his first training grounds. He then moved on to freelance visual effects coordination, most notably on James Cameron's *The Abyss*. While working for Apogee Productions, Mike began producing effects for feature films and special venue projects. Later, while serving as VFX Producer on *True Lies*, he was also a member of the team that built the then-new start-up VFX studio Digital Domain. Some of his other early credits include *Die Hard*, *Big Top Pee Wee*, *Heart & Souls*, *Broken Arrow* and *Galaxy of Terror*.

Mike studied filmmaking at the University of California, and earned his degree in Fine Arts from the prestigious San Francisco Art Institute.

While Mike has contributed to the visual effects efforts on several Academy and BAFTA award-winning films, he has personally won 2 VES Awards for Best Visual Effects, for *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Inception*, and was nominated for his work on *I Am Legend*. Mike is a member of the Producers Guild of America (PGA), and sits on the Board of Directors for the Visual Effects Society (VES), also serving as the Chair of their Membership Committee.

**Treasurer: Gene Rizzardi - Model Supervisor**

Gene is an Emmy Award winning Model Supervisor with 33 years of successful experience in the Motion Picture, Theme Park and Architectural Industries, providing Miniatures, Special Effects and Props and Sets.

- Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences – Visual Effects Branch
- Visual Effects Society – Board of Directors/ Awards Committee, Membership committee, Archive committee/Special Effects Mentor
- VES Handbook of Visual Effects Author
- Association of Professional Modelmakers – Mentor/Special Effects
- IATSE Local 44 – Special Effects / Propshop

**Secretary: Kim Lavery, VFX Producer**

Kim has experience from both the Production & Post Production sides of filmmaking and visual effects producing for a total of over two decades, having worked for Universal Studios on film production, before shifting to visual effects in 1994.

Since then, she has been instrumental in building out specialized visual effects boutique studios, working on films such as *Frida*, *Minority Report*, *Cats and Dogs*, *Charlie's Angels*, *Crouching Tiger*, *Hidden Dragon*, *Terminator 3*, *Last Samurai* and others.

Aligning herself with the global marketplace, she worked at Weta Digital in various producing roles on *King Kong*, *X-Men 3*, *Bridge to Terabithia*, *30 Days of Night*, *Enchanted*, *The Water Horse*, etc. Currently, Kim is continuing to bridge the gap between New Zealand and the U.S. film and post-production markets.

She has served on the VES Awards Committee since its inception in 2002 and has also served as a VES Board Member and Secretary for several terms from 2004 to the present.

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