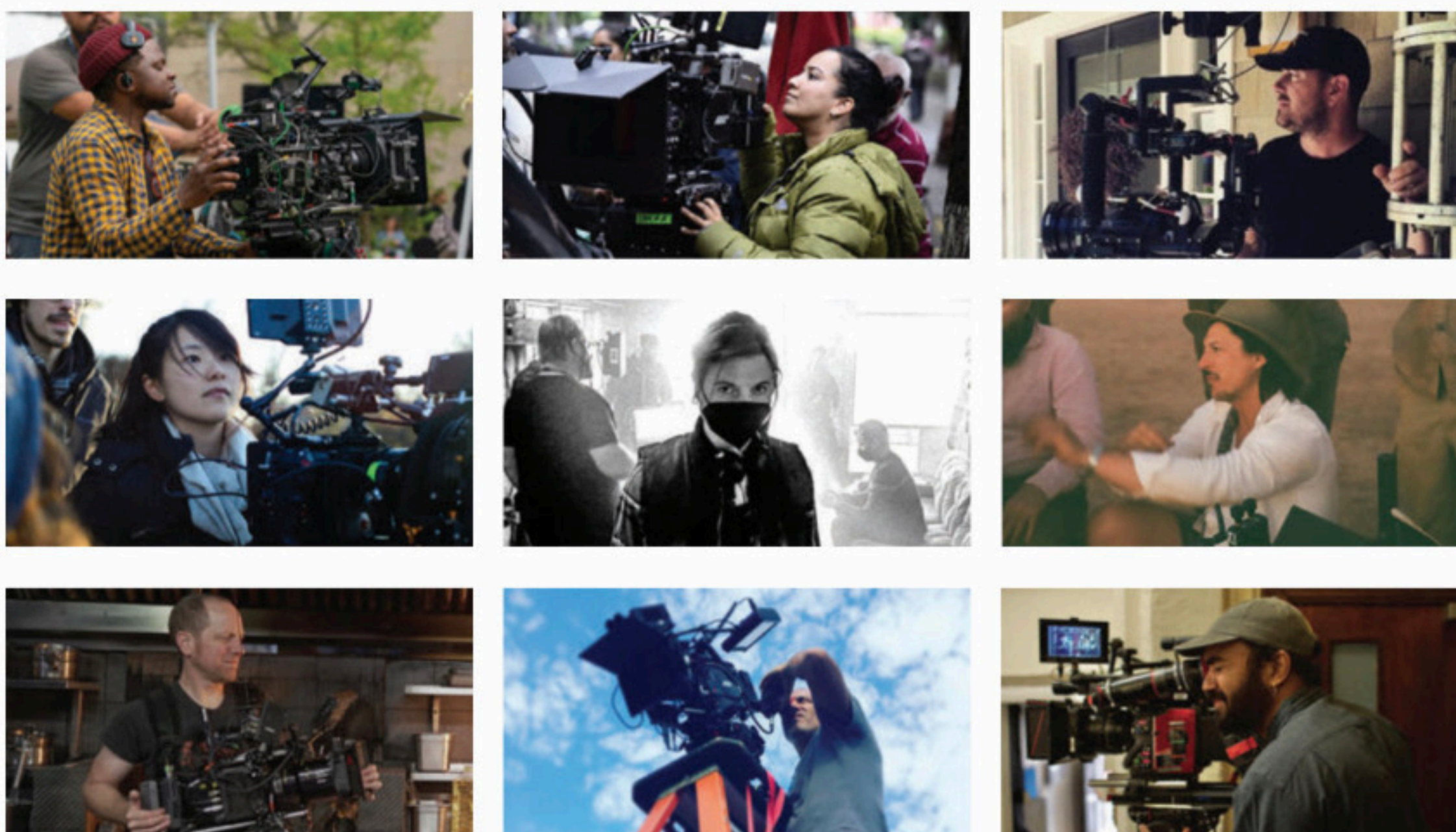


Nine That Shine

AC's 2021 Rising Stars of Cinematography



American Cinematographer inaugurated our annual Rising Stars of Cinematography feature in 2017. Since then, we've watched proudly as various Rising Stars alums have continued their upward-trending career trajectories, producing acclaimed work that has confirmed the creative potential that led the magazine to spotlight their early achievements. Two from that first group of Stars have since become ASC members — Quyen Tran (see page 71) and Kira Kelly — with more surely to follow.

This year's roster was selected by the magazine's editorial staff with informed input from a trio of accomplished ASC members who know talent when they see it: Amelia Vincent, Eric Steelberg and "Risen Star" Kelly. Our collaborative deliberations have produced another diverse group hailing from a wide variety of backgrounds, but common touchstones are their passion for cinematography; their boundless enthusiasm for creative expression; and their admiration for the ASC, its members and their work.

Our new format presents each cinematographer's key credits along with information about their training and education, awards and honors they've earned, artistic influences, lessons they've absorbed on their career path, thoughts on the craft and the collaborative nature of their chosen art form, and recent accomplishments, as well as details about current and future projects.

Without further ado, we present this year's honorees: Archana Borhade; Bruce Francis Cole; Shabier Kirchner; Hillary Fyfe Spera; Ross Giardina, ACS; Todd Antonio Somodevilla, SOC; Daphne Wu; Cale Finot; and Tobia Sempi, AIC.

— Stephen Pizzello, Editor-in-Chief

ROSS GIARDINA, ACS

Key credits: *Gold*, *Catch the Fair One*, *Carl's Motel*, *The Dressmaker* (2nd unit)

Awards/Honors: Camerimage Jury Award nomination for Best Cinematography in a Music Video ("Some Minds" by Flume) and Camerimage Golden Tadpole nomination in the Student Etudes competition (*Legend*); a dozen ACS Awards for numerous projects from 2009-2018 in various categories

Training and education: "I studied in Prague in 2003. After that I started shooting music videos and fashion films; learning for me has always been about doing. I shot a lot of film at the time, slowly building experience with the process and collaborating with directors. Being nominated at Camerimage for Best Cinematography in a Music Video seemed to open a lot of doors for me, as people then saw my body of work."

Best advice he's received: "There is no such thing as a big or small movie — just a good movie."

Artistic inspirations: "I'm inspired and driven not just by film but by art, photography, and the parallels between life and art. Film language that pre-dates popular culture also inspires me greatly."

Recent accomplishments: "I recently shot the upcoming feature *Gold*, directed by Anthony Hayes and starring Zac Efron. It's a post-apocalyptic film that addresses greed, capitalism and the human condition, shot primarily in the desert with a lot of day exteriors. One challenge was installing tone and texture throughout while not deviating from supporting the story, while shooting some sequences over a few days and planning accordingly. Lensing, composition and camera movement were very important to create tension; embracing frontlight to enhance the main character's journey was a leap for me. It was important to root the camera and hold on the character's perspective, and to allow the pacing to be languid and real. This meant very long takes and minimal coverage, as opposed to gratuitous cuts to pain and anguish."

"Also, a film I shot in Buffalo, N.Y., *Catch the Fair One*, recently premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and won an Audience Award. It's directed by Josef Kubota Wladyka and produced by Mollye Asher, who also produced *Nomadland*, and Darren Aronofsky."

Dream project: "I'm interested in both historical and present-day social issues that are incorporated into stories for films that can portray and elevate [those issues] with an execution that provides a heightened realism and a ride for the audience."

