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**GENERATION
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FIVE UNDER 35

by BOB FISHER & DAVID HEURING

photos courtesy of the Cinematographers

Last year we introduced our first profile of Generation NEXT – five Local 600 cinematographers, all under 40 years old, who are driven to change the industry and world as they see it. This year we’re back, upping (or should we say lowering) the ante with a new group of shooters, all under 35, whose experiences in life and filmmaking are as different as their youth, energy and backgrounds would imply. Many have come of age on the edge of a cliff – they were too soon for the all-out digital revolution, too late for the all-celluloid workflow that dominated moviemaking throughout the previous century. And that precarious place in cinema history they occupy is reflected in their art: as one observed, expressing wisdom well beyond his three decades: “I have hope that creativity will prevail in the end. It always seems to.”



Gavin KELLY

AGE: 32

BEST KNOWN FOR: INDIE FEATURES

FAVORITE GENRE: FILMS THAT PROVOKE QUESTIONS AND TOUCH THE DEEPEST PLACES IN OUR HEART

LATEST PROJECT: *THE BROOKLYN BROTHERS BEAT THE BEST*

GEAR: I BELIEVE 35 MM FILM IS THE IDEAL FORMAT THAT GIVES CINEMATOGRAPHERS THE MOST RANGE FOR CREATIVE EXPRESSION.

IDEA FOR CHANGE: FILMS NEED TO CONSTANTLY EVOLVE TO BE POWERFUL AND RELEVANT; WE CAN EMBRACE CLASSIC FILMMAKING WHILE STILL PUSHING THE ENVELOPE.



Gavin Kelly played the guitar in a local band while he was an undergraduate at the University of California in San Diego. He focused on cinematography during his student years in the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California. Kelly earned a master's degree in Fine Arts in 2004 and an honorable mention in the 2005 American Society of Cinematographers student Heritage Award competition.

He stepped into the spotlight early this year when *The Dry Land* was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize in the dramatic film competition at the Sundance Film Festival. The film took audiences on an intimate journey with a stressed out soldier who returned from the war in Iraq to his family and friends in a small town in Texas.

"I've been all over the place during this past year," Kelly shares. "I shot a classic family drama in Memphis called *A Fine Step*. The film centers on two families who live on adjacent ranches involved in the world of Paso Fino horse competitions. I also spent a few weeks in Uganda shooting a documentary and promotional material for a nonprofit organization called Invisible Children that is helping to rebuild schools in war-torn northern Uganda."

Kelly also collaborated with director Ari Sandel on a documentary called *Partying With the Enemy*. They had previously worked together on *West Bank Story*, a musical comedy short that won an Oscar in 2007. Their new documentary explores the nightlife and party scenes in Tel Aviv, Israel, and Beirut, Lebanon. It also follows participants in their everyday lives.

"One of the issues we examined is why two of the best nightlife cities in the world are in these two neighboring

Middle Eastern countries that are in continuing conflict with each other," Kelly explains. "Is it escapism, or a way of letting the enemy know they can't break the other one down? The people in these two cities are so similar in many ways, but they know very little about each other, except as enemies."

This year Kelly also shot in China, Australia and U.S. cities for a Time Warner campaign called Connect A Million Minds, which puts the spotlight on how the United States is falling behind in science, technology and math education and what that means for the future.

"We filmed interviews with dozens of kids in each country," he says. "I used a soft, dual keylight setup which creates double vertical eyelights. We shot using wide lenses with the camera close to create a personal connection. It was eye-opening learning kids' contrasting perspectives in different countries discussing the same topics."

During this writing, Kelly was in Baltimore prepping *The Brooklyn Brothers Beat the Best*. The film is an off-beat road dramedy about two misfit musicians on a makeshift tour across the country in a last-ditch effort to achieve their dreams. The writer/director is Ryan O'Nan, who played a leading role in *The Dry Land*.

"Ryan and I both played in bands in San Diego," Kelly notes. "He wanted me on this film because we know what it is like to be on the road, and we on are the same page creatively. We are going for an intimate, playful, improvisational feel with a handheld camera. The band's performances will be shot live with multiple cameras and Lomo anamorphic lenses which render uniquely expressive flares."