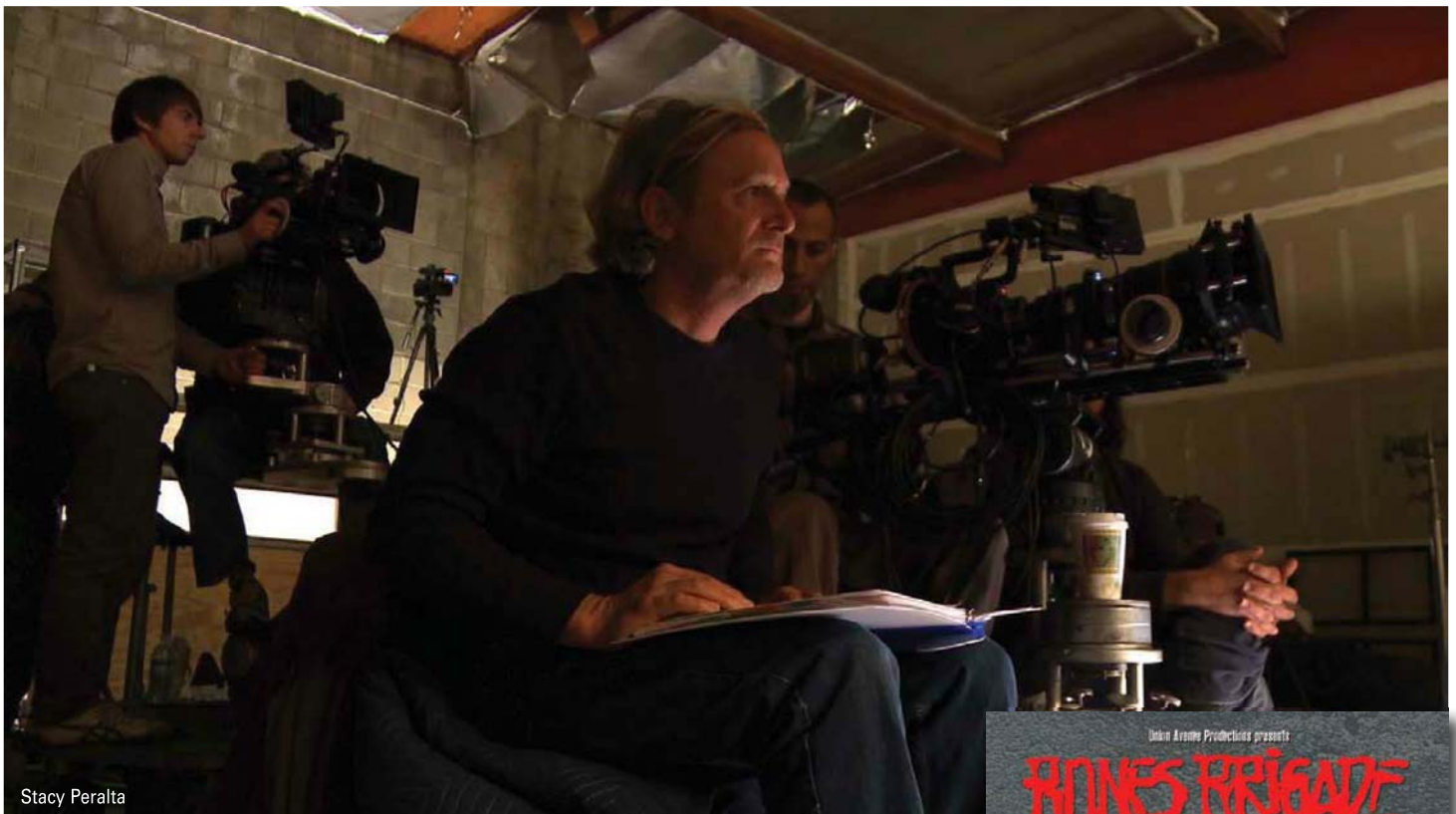


JENNIFER WOLFE

STACY PERALTA'S *BONES BRIGADE*

Revisiting the Grit and Glory of 1980s Skate Culture



Stacy Peralta

The *Bones Brigade* was *the* skateboarding team of the 1980s—a profoundly talented group of outsiders who became the most popular skateboarding team in history. Filmmaker and legendary skateboarder Stacy Peralta documented the team's rise and implosion in his award-winning 2001 film *Dogtown and Z-Boys*, which chronicled the rise of the modern skateboarding industry.

Peralta's newest film, the emotionally charged *Bones Brigade: An Autobiography*, picks up the story where *Dogtown* left off, using archival footage and moving first-person accounts from Brigade members Steve Caballero, Tommy

Guerrero, Tony Hawk, Mike McGill, Lance Mountain and Rodney Mullen, among others, to chronicle the personal histories of the Z-Boys and the origins of the Bones Brigade.

Concerned about making simply another version of *Dogtown*, Peralta was initially resistant to the idea of *Bones Brigade* until the Z-Boys themselves prevailed on him to tell their story. To avoid repeating the gritty, black-and-white back-alley look of *Dogtown*, Peralta and his crew built a lavish, beautifully lit interior set for interviews, which were shot with the ARRI ALEXA camera. Motion control photos, behind-the-scenes footage and time-lapse sequences





Top, left: Archive photo of Stacy Peralta filming
Top, right: Tony Hawk
Left: Rodney Mullen

were captured using a Sony PMW-EX1.

"I had shot a number of commercials last year using the ALEXA and it really blew my mind. I couldn't wait to use it on a feature-length project," Peralta says about his choice of camera. "The ALEXA is simple to use, and I love how it interprets light and the depth of field that can be achieved with it. If you don't have all the lighting equipment you want, you can still get a pretty fantastic shot. I was really, really pleased with it."

Rounding out the nearly 150 hours of interview footage were 450 hours of archival footage in a variety of formats. "We received all sorts of media, ranging from 8mm and 16mm to Betacam SP, 3/4" U-matic and VHS, along with newer footage on DV and digital HD media," says assistant editor John Oliver, who was responsible for organizing the nearly 600 hours of footage for the project. "We had nearly every NTSC format you can think of."

Peralta realized that he was too close to the subject to handle editing on his own, so he

turned to editor Joshua Altman (*No Room for Rock Stars*) to help shape the footage into a story. "Before we started cutting, I went through all the footage, including about 2,000 motion-control photos, and created at least 50 different bins," Peralta relates. "Josh and I went through the bins together so I could give him an idea about what was what, with him taking notes along the way."

Interview footage and motion control photos were transcoded into Apple Final Cut Pro as ProRes 422 (HQ) at 23.98 fps, while archival footage, due to storage limitations, was ingested into Final Cut Pro as QuickTime 10-bit uncompressed 4:2:2 at 29.97 fps. The editing team used three 24 TB RAID drives to manage the nearly 26 TB of digital media, cloning the three drives to serve as backups and employing FireWire drives for the overflow.

"Working from the interview transcripts, Stacy began scripting sequences, handing off the scripts for me to edit into Final Cut Pro,"

Oliver explains. "Once Josh came on board, it was easy to get him up to speed because we had many sequences already cut and the footage was so well organized. I wanted cloned drives so that I could continue adding footage to one of the drives while Josh was using the other to edit. The third was for added backup and peace of mind. Once I got to a point where I had more new content to add to the project, I would drive to Venice and swap drives with Josh. He would continue cutting and I would update the drive he had been using. With Josh in Venice, Stacy in Santa Monica and me in Santa Barbara, it was a really effective way to have us all pushing forward to meet our deadline while working in different locations."

"You can't put a price on organization when it comes to the editing world," Peralta adds. "All three of us were working in separate locations with a lot of distance between us, but it worked out beautifully."

Working under an extremely limited budget, Peralta credits the affordability of new filmmaking tools with making *Bones Brigade* a reality. "This was the lowest budget I had ever worked with," Peralta says. "Years ago we would have had to use a Teranex to handle the archival footage, and that would have been costly enough to kill the project right there. Final Cut Pro handles all of that now. And although we shot interviews with a conventional crew, essentially the three of us—Josh, John and I—made this film. It's amazing what you can do with the tools that are now available." **dv**