

Camera Operator [DAVE KNOX, YEARS ON JOB: 21]

Dave Knox spends his days calculating exposures, choosing lens filters and composing shots. Those are a camera operator's clearly defined tasks. Ultimately, he also acts as the point man, ensuring that cast and crew are getting the right shots to tell the story. "I'm much closer to the actors than the director is," he says. "I'm the one with my hand on the trigger, the one squinting through the lens." Consequently, providing the director with feedback after each shot is a crucial part of the job. "I like to say I see the movie first," says Knox, whose credits include *Silence of the Lambs* and *Hitch*. Knox's guide to film-crew jargon, *Strike the Baby and Kill the Blonde*, is due out this month from Three Rivers Press.

LENS

Panavision's Primo 11:1 lens rents for hundreds of dollars a day and has won its own Oscar. Its 23 glass elements and high-torque motor allow for buttery 3-minute zooms.

FILM MAGAZINE, CAMERA BODY

This Panavision film magazine, also equipped with a high-torque motor, feeds the 1000-ft. film reels to the soundproof camera body beneath.

DOLLY

A 420-pound, hydraulic Fischer dolly supports the camera—and Knox—while a crew member called a grip pushes it along mini tracks.

DIRECTORS FINDER

A mini zoom lens on a well-worn leather strap helps Knox visualize the shot in widescreen format. Then the director peers through it for final approval.

The Toughest Shot

“Chase scenes, when the actor and the camera are both moving and you're doing technical computations on the fly. Or maybe the time my camera got hit by Lex Luthor's Lear jet. That was a disaster.”

