

## The Editor's Cut - Episode 029 - "Interview with Lisa Robison, CCE"

### Sarah Taylor

This episode was sponsored by Finale — A Picture Shop company, the Vancouver Post Alliance and IATSE 891. Hello and welcome to The Editor's Cut. I'm your host Sarah Taylor. Today's episode is part of our Master Series and is a Q and A with Lisa Robison, CCE that was recorded on November 20th 2019 at Finale in Vancouver. Lisa has been editing for 20 years on a variety of television and film projects. She has been recognized for her work internationally. Lisa talks about her path of becoming an editor and her process of editing the Q and A was moderated by Kerry McDowall, Post-production Supervisor and Chair of the VPA.

### Kerry McDowall

Welcome to this Master Series. So Lisa here I just wanted to point out that she is quite the award winning editor. She has won 10 awards and I just want to point out that two of them were she won 2 Leo's this year and she won 2 Leo's last year. So your track record is pretty pretty strong and consistent. She's also had 14 nominations on top of the 10 awards, three which are for Daytime Emmys as well as Leo's and the CCE and then there was also Circle Writer of Cinema. The Spanish award which I imagine was for Life Without Me.

### Lisa Robison

It was for My Life Without Me and a neighbor of mine told me that I was nominated. Steve my neighbor was stalking me. Steve thanks.

### Kerry McDowall

So welcome Lisa and thank you for sharing your time with the audience tonight. I figure probably the first question that would make sense is just talk about how you got into editing in the first place.

### Lisa Robison

I'm going to try to make this brief. Some of you know I used to be in the camera department how I got in the camera department was very by fluke my brother was shooting a documentary about the making of Expo. So that gives you an idea of how long ago that was. And I loved it. And then I was the the camera rat. That wouldn't go away and I cleaned cases until they basically ended up hiring me and then got into the union. I was a camera assistant for about eight years. I had a very serious asthma attack where I basically died and saw the white light. So then I had to get out of that and I was at home drinking and watching Absolutely Fabulous. And my brother was like "you can't do that forever. So come and sit with me in the edit suite" because he was cutting the pilot for a show called Outer Limits. And I was in my early 30s trying to restart my career because I couldn't be on set anymore with allergies that would trigger my asthma. So I sat and I watched him and I was like I think I can do this. And I became the intern for free on Outer Limits a nice union show and I stirred up things by working for free and a nice union show being the PA that would pick up the dailies at 7:00 and meet the fish flight at midnight because I was determined. So they ended up hiring me for a big whopping 400 dollars a week to be an assistant editor. And after leaving camera was a bit of a kick. My brother hired me on my first show to be an assistant then I was an assistant for four or five years and a Post Supervisor gave me my first job editing. She said I think you can edit and I didn't want to. I was I was like don't waste your time I don't want to edit I don't want to edit and my one episode of Highlander the Raven turned into three and then that turned into eight. And so, I had my first credit, had my first show thanks to Tracey Ullman and then I didn't know what to do. I didn't want to go back to assisting and my partner Lisa Binkley had done the

first season of Cold Squad and she said to the producers I know an editor. And they interviewed me and again they gave me a couple. Then the couple turned in two I think I did three seasons of Cold Squad. That's kind of how I didn't do it the... I'm the most untraditional person you've ever met. So yeah the Coles Notes version.

### Kerry McDowall

So I think we're going to start talking about specific shows or projects that Lisa worked on the first one is My Life Without Me which I love. You a great job. So how did you come to be the editor of that film.

### Lisa Robison

You know I got an interview which I don't really... I believe I had worked with... I can't remember the timeline but I knew the producer. And he said I think you'll like this script. So I read the script I loved the script. The caveat to the script was you can cut but we're not taking you to Barcelona. We can't afford to take you to Barcelona. We're only hiring a local editor. Very low budget film that because it was a Canadian — Spanish copro they just were it was like “No you're not going.” And I was like I just want to be attached to this film because I love it. So, the scene you're about to see I cut it and I sent it to the director while shooting and a lot of people don't do that. I'm a big believer in working with the director and showing them my madness. And if they don't like it they can let me know, if they want to build on shots they can... anything like that. A lot of people... a lot of editors I know prefer to wait until the director's in the room and then show them. So that's what I did. I think I'll let you see the scene and then I'll talk about it after. My Life Without Me is about a young mother who's diagnosed with cancer. And she she's has three months to live. So she's trying to find a new wife for her husband and thus a mom for her kids. And this scene is her recording messages for each of her two girls birthdays for them to listen to. This was a seven page scene in the script and I don't know how many hours I got of dailies possibly six. And Isabel Coixet who was the director was the camera operator so it was all single camera. There wasn't A B. It wasn't easy to find continuity even though Sarah Polley is Canada's golden girl. So that's the scene is a mom recording messages for her daughters.

### [Film Clip]

Hey my buddy Penny I'm not gonna be at your birthday party but there's nothing I'd like more in the whole wide world. I'll bet Graham has made a special birthday cake just for you with your name on it big chocolate letters. Penny, I want you to know that the day that you were born, I held you in my arms and that was the happiest day of my whole life. I was so happy I couldn't even speak. I just stroked your tiny little feet I cried with happiness. Without you I could have never found out that lions eat pancakes or that their bed could be a raft. Try and look after Patsy, K? I know it's hard because sometimes she makes you mad and everything. I know it's not easy being a big sister buddy but I know that you can do it. OK. Mommy sends you millions and millions of kisses.

### Lisa Robison

Like I said the you're not going to Barcelona. We don't have any money. So I sent it to her and I got a little message on my old flip phone. Come to set. Right away. After sending this to her and I was like Oh my God I'm fired. My assistant was like “don't send it. It's horrible. I can't believe you jump cut. You should... like she's going to fire you.” Like don't even. He was trying to talk me out of sending it right. It was like yeah it was all pretty much like the beginning. So I cut the first two segments of each daughter. And then I was like What are we to do with this footage. It's like it's boring. It's horrible. So I jump cut it in and honestly pretty much what you're seeing is my first cut that I sent to her because she was like I love it. I'm not touching anything. So she calls me to set it just like the editors here the editors here and I'm like Oh my God. She's going to fire me in front of the crew because she was like she was Spanish and

very powerful and just like oh God I'm just like OK this is horrible. And I haven't done much like I'd only been cutting for maybe three years and I was just like No. So they gave me a chair and I'm like oh God this is horrible. And she goes you're coming to Spain. I don't know how we're going to do it. And she says Esther. Esther and she calls Esther Garcia who is Pedro Almodovar's business partner. And they sent it to Pedro and Pedro basically phoned and said she's coming figure it out she's coming to Barcelona. So the reason I love the scene is A it got me there and I was cutting... honestly I know it's a stupid saying but I was cutting with my gut. I was cutting by instinct and if she hated it, I could undo it but this was what I thought. This is my first instinct. If somebody says you can't do something or they say it's not in the budget just do it if you love it and you think you can tell a story with it do it. And if you have an assistant that doesn't believe in you don't work with them ever again because I haven't worked with him again. So what happened. We got to go to Barcelona. I outed myself. I said Oh if I go to Barcelona can I bring my partner? And they were like Oh you want to bring your partner. Yeah. It's a woman. Yeah. Oh we have to get you a nice apartment. Well what was I going to get? So we got a really nice apartment for five weeks and when we get to Barcelona Isabel is like I don't know what we're gonna do. And I was like Oh my God we just flew for 24 hours to get here. What do you mean you don't know what we're going to do. And she was like we'll work 4-day weeks. You guys take long weekends you go check out Spain. So it's it's my watermark. I've never had anything like that again. But if somebody says... if you really love something and they say you can't finish it stick with it because you don't know.

**Kerry McDowall**

And what was Isabel like as a director to work with?

**Lisa Robison**

Very passionate. She was the camera operator. She didn't care about the union. She was like well then I'm not making this film here and then the producers all scrambled. So she she's very well known in Spain. Walking around the streets of Barcelona with her, it was as if I was walking with Spielberg because they were like [whispers], and she does not suffer fools. She was a tough nut but if you did something she liked it, and if she didn't like something she... but she could stand up to Pedro and which say something because he's very volatile.

**Kerry McDowall**

When you were talking about sitting with the footage as it was scripted how long... did your gut tell you to just chop it up right away or were you really trying to stick to the script? Because that's kind of what you thought you were supposed to do? You know and then did you go back to it you know like at what point did you just kind of throw your hands in the air and say this isn't working. I want to do this.

**Lisa Robison**

It was in the day of when you watched the dailies go in you know. So you digitized and you would sit with your assistant. You watch them. And at first I was like Oh my God. Because it was like four hours or something. And it was when I saw the final close ups of the writing on the cassette cover I was like I think I know how I can shorten it. And it was then, then I realized what I could do because I was worried and I was just like oh my god my god why through the car... there is this this little I don't want to say a voice because I sound like a crazy person. But there was this little thing that said you know what, chop it up.

**Kerry McDowall**

You want to set up the next clip from My Life Without Me?

### Lisa Robison

Yeah, so this clip... this is Anne, Sarah Polley is inviting her work buddy because she thinks Laurie who is Amanda Plummer could possibly be a good wife for her husband. So she invites Anne to dinner in their mobile home. And because I had sent this I knew I could jump cut and when you have Amanda Plummer, Amanda Plummer doesn't care where the camera is she doesn't care what she did the previous take. So I jumped cut that.

### Kerry McDowall

So that aesthetic... you established the type of editing.

### Lisa Robison

Yeah. And then the next scene is the dinner scene and I'd like to play the dinner scene and then a lot of you are experienced so you'll know this, but I'd like to play it. You watch it and then we'll play the dinner scene again and I'll just do a little commentary of working the reactions of the little girl. Anne and Don, Don is Scott Speedman, have two little girls and the little girls one of them hasn't acted much at all. And the one that plays Penny the older one has acted. No the scene scripted and even when she shot it even when I cut it it didn't focus on so much of Amanda Plummer eating so badly with barbecue sauce on her and the little girl... it became about the little girl noticing Amanda Plummer when the director and I were looking through it and stealing the shots because the shots of Penny weren't exactly the shots at that moment in time a couple of the shots were while they were setting up her just looking at Amanda Plummer in disdain as a person as an actor to an actor that this little kid knew that Amanda Plummer was kind of out of it. So we stole those shots to create her deadpan stare. Yeah I know you guys all see it. It's pretty funny... [clip plays simultaneously] ...lovely that Isabel didn't care what Penny was doing. She didn't care about continuity with the mashed potatoes. And this is just one camera. It's a real motorhome like it's not like they pop the wall of the motor home. They rented a motor home and shot through the window and then Isabel got through somewhere like it was just you know, tight. Know you know we stole that line and put it in the mouth because her mouth was covered with her hand. And this is her looking at her waiting for a reset. So it's just awesome. And that's why I hate when camera guys put their hand over the lens because you never know. You never know when there's gonna be gold especially when you're working with kids and she's moved on to be quite an actress, Jessica Amlee. Look at her, I love that she doesn't care that she has barbecue sauce. And is totally into the character. And then... [clip continues to play simultaneously] this is stolen from later the scene. We moved it around. So [laughs] she's just awesome so sometimes you have to look. I know some of you guys have edited a lot. So you know that. But when you change what the scene was to be more funny because you could just throw out the script and you throw your preconceived ideas and say let's see if we can dig up reactions and let's see if we can steal and make it look like all Laurie's doing is eating. [clip continues to play]. So that's when kids can be fun.

### Kerry McDowall

Do we want to move on to Unspeakable?

### Lisa Robison

Yeah. Yes. Let's do something more current more upbeat. Yeah.

### Kerry McDowall

Lisa and I we worked together on that last year, had the privilege of work with Lisa for the first time. Took that long. It's crazy. So the episode was Kreyer and Andy Mikita was the director. So what was... I know he and you talked during prep so what was his vision going into the shoot?

### Lisa Robison

He wanted... the whole episode like 75 percent of it takes place in an inquiry room, which isn't like a courtroom it's just a couple of people lined up in sort of like this being questioned by a judge and two lawyers and the newspeople and other witnesses and he and Rob the creator-writer-producer, they wanted it to be fast paced. They were really worried they were going to lose the audience with all this dialogue because it was like All About Eve kind of dialogue, it's dialogue driven. It's people in chairs sitting. Very little action. So Andy shot three cameras on pretty much every setup. So he was covered and then the other thing he wanted to do was to show that some of it was shot through monitors because the news camera people were there. And then also some of the shots are purposely 4:3 because it was in 1994? '93? What do you want to talk about what the whole show was about?

### Kerry McDowall

So by the time you get to Episode 6 which is this episode the whole the whole series is about the tainted blood scandal in Canada. So it starts in about 1981 when AIDS AIDS sort of showed up but no one knew what it was, before everyone knew that it was a virus before it had a name. And obviously it was getting into all of the blood products and Unspeakable is specifically about how it affected hemophiliacs and because they rely on blood plasma to help clotting. And none of this blood was ever being checked because they didn't know what to check for because they didn't know what it was. But then even when they, when scientists discovered that it was and called it AIDS they still didn't know how to do... they didn't know how to filter it out of the blood product. And the Canadian Red Cross dealt with all of the blood donations and they were very hesitant to remove it in case it was infected because they didn't have blood to replace it with, or the technology to replace it with anything that would have been treated at the time. So that was kind of the first issue. And the second issue was when they did realize how they could treat it they still decided to put all the tainted blood out in the world and in Canada. And so the inquiry was trying to figure out whether you know now that they had all of this information they need to get the information and compile it as one place and one judge was tasked with this inquiry to decide whether any wrongdoing existed. So you know by the time you get to Episode Six there's a lot of information that the viewer is already dealing with and this in one way is great because it summarizes... like all these episodes of information kind of finally gets summarized into this one episode. A lot of the dialogue is brought from actual transcripts of the real inquiry. So I also think that Andy and Rob were very aware that you know this dialogue has to be how it is because that's what was said so that he wasn't taking liberties as a writer to make it more like fancy or you know like it was. So it is it read in the script is being quite dry. But it ended up being probably my favorite episode of the whole series. So the inquiry is is at the point where the judge is trying to compile the information and figure out what went wrong about ten years ago.

### Lisa Robison

When you have witnesses you know you bring in Person A, and you ask them a question. And then you bring in Person B and you'll ask them the same question. But by that time it might be winter. So, their wardrobe changed. Give it a sense of time because the inquiry wasn't just done in a month. So you'll notice that there's changes in wardrobe to give a subtle sense of changes of the time that went by. But the dialogue is continuous as if asking me where did you park your car. And you say in the garage and then you say that I came up the elevator. So it's as if you were asking three people the same question with the answer continuing. You'll see it's a bit of a thread. So I was just like well so what do you want it

to look like? And Andy said from the deposition insider which is not my normal cutting style. So it was a bit of a challenge for me to try and find when you're given three cameras, it's six minutes long. So I don't even know how many pages it was it was like 10 pages. I was insane. It was a beefy amount of dailies every day and to find THE take that told THE part of THE sentence that I wanted to take, that also went nicely to the next shot... it was a bit of a Rubik's cube.

### [Film Clip]

Hello my name is Lawrence Hartley and I have been president of the Canadian hemophilia society since 1986. I am also a hemophiliac who is co infected with HIV and hepatitis C.. This story is tragic obviously but the reason it is so tragic is because it could have been avoided. Those of us that depended on blood products to live were seriously injured by a Canadian system that just didn't seem to care. Now I understand people want a triumph over tragedy story some kind of silver lining but for those of us who have lost someone. There is no end to the grief and so we must speak here today about how to fix things for the future but also know that nothing will ever repair the damage done. No one wanted to recognize the problem, to recognize it would've meant taking on the immense task of dealing with it. Doctors and nurses said they were relying on the Red Cross, the Red Cross pointed at the Bureau of Biologics. No one was taking responsibility. We were treaters and our overriding concern was to treat our patients well. We knew very little about AIDS but we knew a lot about hemophilia and the complications of bleeding. Not that I'm trying to absolve anyone but I think it's important to remember that we can't look back and judge ourselves and what we didn't know at the time. AIDS was a difficult mystery to unravel. Furthermore I think it can be too easy to scapegoat certain people at the Red Cross when in fact it was the entire blood system that failed. As early as 1981 there were reports of a new disease in the US and there was no reason to expect it wouldn't reach Canada. The BOB asked the Red Cross to monitor the situation.

### Lisa Robison

Do you guys have any questions?

### Kerry McDowall

Yeah. Maybe this is a good time to open the floor.

### Audience Question

That scene is frickin awesome. Cudos to you that is a rollercoaster. I loved it. Was the pacing sort of what you're going for from beginning or is that something that you worked with Andy later on?

### Lisa Robison

No. The pacing was what they wanted from the beginning even from the script even. Yeah correct me if I'm wrong there was eight episodes?

### Kerry McDowall

Eight episodes.

### Lisa Robison

Eight. I think he originally had ten possibly. Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah. It felt to me that it was all kept... there was such important dialogue and story and facts that it was kept. And then it was kind of squeezed into eight. So the first episode is you know Rob said let it breathe let it breathe let it breathe and then we were like it's gotta be to time, it's gotta be to time, it's gonna be to time. So we had to make... I had to make that one because it wasn't... like Kerry said it was factual. So cutting out dialogue

all the time wasn't an option. So it was trimming and with this scene it was trimming like like Oh my God that one frame really makes a difference. And kudos to the actors because they were like... they all knew their dialogue. They all knew it, they all could say it fast. Like West Wing. they were all... we can all say it fast we'll help out... was great.

### **Audience Question**

But it all flows from shot to shot but like you said like time continuity is right. Like the questions asked and different person answers the right and different things like bouncing all over the room like it's moved so fast.

### **Lisa Robison**

Yeah and they didn't want to say "spring" and "fall" and "back to spring" and "summer" and then back to... so it was just you know let's be subtle and do it with clothing which was great. And I think the audience picks up on it. I mean I've never been one for continuity and if you've seen La La Land you'll know there's the continuity with him at the piano. And the different shirt. And nobody notices.

### **Audience Question**

I thought you gave them exactly what they wanted in this scene. Aside from you picking up a camera and going back to your old... I think you did a great job. Now you mentioned you didn't like this scene. What about your prior scenes did you... would you do anything to change those scenes? Like when you look at your previous work do you always wish, or thought you could have made them different?

### **Lisa Robison**

Some, yeah there's some things I never want to watch again you know because there's... you're just like uh...uh...

### **Audience Question**

Of these these two scenes for example that you showed us your first two. Would you change anything in those ones?

### **Lisa Robison**

No you know what's interesting about those is I don't think I would. And I don't think... I went into that with naivete. I didn't know the rules. I didn't know the rules of editing. I didn't go to film school. It wasn't until I would bring cuts home and show Lisa and she would go "no no you can't do that you can't do that. That was not the rules." So I didn't know I was breaking the rules. I just thought that's cool. And in fight scenes you can do that kind of thing but no you shouldn't do that when it's two people talking. So I did that with My Life Without Me I did that with a lot of instinct. If you get in the groove of cutting for certain networks they want things a certain way and you lose that artistic style. Because you're told to follow the convention of no no no, we don't do jump cuts. We don't do, we don't do that here. Which is why I loved working on independent film which was My Life Without Me. Rob was great about us jump cutting or long dissolves or whatever we wanted but that was a different thing. But sometimes you get stuck and those shows I have no desire to watch again because I knew I was just fitting the mold of that network.

### **Audience Question**

Can you speak to the difference between working in episodic and, just where you had time?

### **Lisa Robison**

This is how I work. I watch everything. I watch the false starts. I watch everything and in my bin as I'm watching everything I create a little timeline of selects and as I'm watching I plunk it in. So that's sometimes how my jump cuts are created because I plunked it into the selections. So it's just happenstance sometimes. And that's the way I find it works the fastest is to pick selects from all that. With doing it that way it's my play time of kind of going Oh can this go with this? I don't know if I'm answering your question.

### **Kerry McDowall**

I think by episodic I mean you only have two days after your last day of dailies, four if you're lucky. It's hard to have time to what if, right?

### **Lisa Robison**

As you keep doing it as you keep cutting you get faster and you figure out ways you know. I think what I do now I wouldn't be able to do after three years of editing. And just the... like when I walked in and saw all the dailies for Unspeakable I was totally overwhelmed. I was just like oh my god but you just you know one setup at a time....

### **Audience Question**

Did you do that same process like selects, reels?

### **Lisa Robison**

Yeah I do that all the time. I just find it easier. I miss the days where I would sit with my assistant and watch stuff digitize in because you would go "Oh that's awesome." And then now you just go "Oh my God it's all this I just got to dive in" and you lose that sort of... it's not tactile but it feels tactile to be able to watch every shot. So yeah I feel from being on set I want to see everything the director's seen so that when they say well what about and take one when there's that thing and I go "Well you didn't print it." "Well what do you mean. I wanted everything printed" and the script supervisor only printed the last one. And I'm not a believer in the last take is the best take. I've worked with so many directors that go I know I printed a lot but just use the last take and then they'll go "What take is this?" And I was like what's the first take. And they're like "oh my god that's awesome." So I love it when they weren't listening to me as a director you know. So I don't believe the last take is the best take. And I also believe that if you say to somebody "is this bumping for you?" Then it's bumping. So. And I also get up when I cut something I'm here and I'm looking at my screen and then to review it, I get up and I walk around. I move, I get up and look at it from a different angle and the other thing I highly suggest is exporting it and watching it at home a little distance if you drink or partake in something else or however you want to relax watch it that way. Watch it with fresh eyes. And a different perspective because it does make a difference. And if you have an assistant that you love and trust have them sit with you, because having that person, I don't know why having that extra body makes a difference... you're heightened.

### **Kerry McDowall**

Because when the scene comes up that you're questioning, you start getting anxious because you're wondering where their reaction is gonna be.

### **Audience Question**

One question I have for you is when you're working with Isabel like she you can see it from the scene. She clearly has like a very cinema verite thing going on with her, like how she shoots. Do you find that is freeing as an editor to work like that or you know or do you find you know when focus might not be exactly in a key moment like when you want to be cutting into an actor it might not find focus or the



frame might not be perfect. Do you prefer that style of shooting over more locked off traditional framing?

### **Lisa Robison**

I guess it depends on the show like some shows suit being hand-held. And and I love that as long as it's not making me nauseous after twelve hours and some shows are more suited to a lock off kind of thing. And I find if it's racking focus and gets there it kind of drives me nuts. But I respect it because I did that job and it's the worst job in the world.

### **Audience Question**

But she was exceptional camera person.

### **Lisa Robison**

She was and I have to say the end... there's so many scenes in that film that are just beautiful the way she shot them and she loved the dirty frame. I love a dirty frame, I love the sense... I love horror films where you're following somebody behind them and then it becomes their POV. Those kind of shots it draws you in. Her style of filmmaking I feel drew you in whether even if it was the wide slightly moving shots... but even Andy in Unspeakable it's not in the scene you saw. But there's a scene where there's an old school fan just kind of in the frame so you feel like you're part of it as opposed to these perfectly clean. But I've done recently these romantic comedies and it's very clean and it works better being very clean I don't know why but it just does.

### **Audience Question**

The context of the breadth of work you've done in so many different kinds of projects. Can you talk about style like do you think you have a style or do you... are you a chameleon depending on what you're working on?

### **Lisa Robison**

I thought I had a style up until Krever Unspeakable. And then that made me go hmmm...it's interesting. But I do my initial gut thing is I love hanging on people. If we've got a great performance I'm like why cut away unless I need to connect, and there's an awesome connection, and then I go back. But I find as I've edited different styles I, I cut less I cut a lot less and I actually now I don't mind if a producer says oh can you add a shot. Because I would rather have that note than not have it. And then realize you know what I didn't need that cut away. Why am I cutting? I want to be... and that's what I find with the Krever scene is sometimes there's times I wanted to be on Michael Shanks. And see his... because he's a father whose son is... in fact for lack of a better word and I wanted to see him and they were like No. He was like No let's keep going. And I was like okay... you know I love becoming very passionate always like with what I'm doing. And if I don't believe it, nobody is gonna believe it.

### **Kerry McDowall**

And what was it like on Unspeakable because normally especially in Vancouver like we work on you know very fantastical things you know visual effects and Unspeakable was the exact opposite in that this all really happened. So it's historically accurate. The main characters were fictitious but based on Robert Cooper's family, friends. Scenes were literally lifted right out of his childhood and put on screen. So what was that like as an editor to be sitting there. It's a little more loaded than other stuff that you probably work on.

### **Lisa Robison**

Oh yeah for sure.

**Kerry McDowall**

You know the pressure to get it right?

**Lisa Robison**

Yeah. And Rob you know this is Rob's passion project. You wanted to tell his story like without him being disappointed, without him being wondering what if you know which I think is why I get upset that I didn't call it because it was his... that episode is the culmination of the lack of a better word of the whole tainted blood scandal.

**Kerry McDowall**

I think we all felt it on the show that you know you wanted to do right by this show because it was more than just entertainment. Like we were making more than just entertainment.

**Lisa Robison**

For me it was as close to a documentary as I've ever had the opportunity, I've never worked on documentary. But to be there and you've got the person beside you that has gone through this you want them to make sure that the the actors you're seeing the right performance and your being on it the right way. And yeah you don't want him to be disappointed. He's your... it's going to sound silly. He's the father figure of the show. You want him to be happy. I mean my God the hours of when I saw the boxes that they were carrying and of all the files of all research that he and the writers have gone through and then him describing how many more were at somebody else's house and that you know that's years and years worth of research. It's not just somebody... not that writing a script is easy by any means... but it's not you know a fictional piece that someone wrote in six months. It's someone's life.

**Kerry McDowall**

Or where you can take liberties just to advance the plot nicely.

**Lisa Robison**

And you know you hear him telling stories of this is what... that was my friend that died and you're like oh....

**Kerry McDowall**

Or this was the exact conversation that I had with my mother. And you're like you whoa. So yeah it was it was heavy.

**Lisa Robison**

And it was nothing that any of us took lightly. Like you you were there to tell somebody story. Yeah it was great.

**Kerry McDowall**

Yeah it was a unique experience for sure. Yeah.

**Audience Question**

Do you have any films that you could suggest that kind of like, I mean for you were just you watched it as like, power pack like how do they do editing? That amazed me... it just has just loaded with just brilliant editing, useful to learn from?

### Lisa Robison

I'm going to totally date myself. I knew... when I knew I could be an editor is I saw a film called Out Of Sight and the still frames... and Soderbergh I became obsessed with Soderbergh and Anne V. Coates. I watched everything he did. I was like who thought of that? Freeze frame. So then I worked with a director who's is not directing anymore Jorge Montesi. He told me you find a film you love and you analyze it. And I analyzed Out Of Sight. And I thought I can be an editor. And that was my... and now there's so many films that I watch that I just... Wanted... I watched Wanted over and over again which is this action film. I just love that for action. I love that film. I loved Big Little Lies for drama. I love that series for... and that's probably why I cut less now because they are — mind you the actors are awesome — but it's also the story point is why are we cutting why are we choosing to cut away there. Why not wait. Wait and wait and wait. So that's my... yeah. So I just say if you find a film there's lot to be learned from Pixar too. I think they're the best storytellers. And visually and scripted because they don't cut away that often either for little kids and for big kids.

### Kerry McDowall

When you were saying to the other day that you think it's really important for people to watch really bad films.

### Lisa Robison

Oh I do. I can learn so much from Con Air. It's such a bad film but so awesome. For anybody... you guys are cutting but for anybody who is wanting to cut and you're working with an editor you can ask them “Can I cut” but just cut. Cut on your own. Just grab a bin and cut on your own and compare it maybe to what the editor did but what I would do is I would cut the dailies and I would compare it to what the locked cut was. Because who knows if... I'm not serving the editor, I'm serving the network. You're serving the studio, the network. So to find out what they wanted. I found it a good way to learn. Also my spouse was a great way to learn but Yeah watch watch everything. I love watching... sometimes I love watching bad stuff because you're like whoa whoa whoa whoa whoa. You're like I would never do that. And then they make it look easy. And you know it's not. Find a workflow that works for you. That's my last parting words. Parting words: find a workflow that works for you. Don't listen to anybody else.

### Kerry McDowall

Thank you so much Lisa.

### Lisa Robison

Thank you.

### Sarah Taylor

Thanks for joining us today and a big thank you to our panelists and moderator. A special thanks goes to Jane MacRae, Trevor Mirosh, Finale, VPA, and IATSE 891. This panel was recorded by Mychaylo Prystup. The main title sound design was created by Jane Tattersall. Additional ADR recording by Andrea Rusch. Original music provided by Chad Blain. This episode was mixed and mastered by Tony Bao. The CCE has been supporting Indspire - an organization that provides funding and scholarships to Indigenous post secondary students. We have a permanent portal on our website at [cceditors.ca](http://cceditors.ca) or you can donate directly at [indspire.ca](http://indspire.ca). The CCE is taking steps to build a more equitable ecosystem within our industry and we encourage our members to participate in a way they can.

If you've enjoyed this podcast, please rate and review us on Apple Podcasts and tell your friends to tune in. Til next time I'm your host Sarah Taylor.

### **Outtro**

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