

AT WAR AGAINST WAR

Speaking on three Screenplays written by Duffy Hecht

May '68, Tracker and 38 Minutes form a trilogy of scripts written by Duffy Hecht, united by a clear and urgent undertone: an anti-war stance. Whether set in the 19th century in the Montana territory, portraying the Nez Perce massacre at the Big Hole River, the 1960s, on the battlefields of Vietnam, or in today's world, witnessing Ukraine's invasion in real-time, these scripts function under the same premise, portraying a unique vision that showcases how century after century, we have been plagued by the absolute worst part in some peoples' character.

In "May '68," the turbulent era of the 1960s offers a unique perspective where the personal evolutions of the two lead characters are accelerated by the threat of war. Their stories mirror the broader societal shift toward activism and resistance, capturing the spirit of a generation standing up against the Vietnam War.

"Tracker" delves into the complexities of identity, family, and sacrifice in the harsh wilderness of 1877 Montana. A Tracker, a drop-out from society, now a mountain man, rescues an Indian boy from sheer death, forcing him to enter a corrupt and racist town.

Fast-forwarding to the modern age, "38 Minutes" (aka Nuclear Dreams) (Co-Written by Douglas Stark) delves into the looming threat of a nuclear war. Set against the backdrop of geopolitical turmoil, the three women protagonists - a Russian dissident, an 11th grade schoolteacher in Wichita, Kansas and one of her students, experience the war and its consequences.

A resounding message echoes through his trilogy of narratives spanning centuries. The human spirit is unyielding, capable of enduring, adapting, and evolving even amidst the most turbulent times in history.

Hecht encourages the reader to find the common thread in each of these stories. Tracker combats racism in Three Forks. Dariel in May '68 fights against two governments to uncover the truth about what happened to her father at the battle at Dien Bien Phu. Elena in Nuclear Dreams dares to stop a broadcast on state-run Russian TV, telling the world that the war being waged in front of them is based on lies.

Within this ambitious and electrifying collection of scripts, we glimpse hope through the eyes of characters who prioritize activism above all else, even those who initially wished to remain uninvolved. Whether you embrace it or not, everyone is a part of it. Whether you are fleeing your past or attempting to stay in the shadows, the consequences of war will eventually catch up with you. It falls upon us to take a stand against what has plagued us through the centuries. The message of these three screenplays is simple but clear: Peace, non-violence, dignity, not war. ***Essay coverage by fiverr / Jan 2025***

TITLE	AUTHOR	FORM
READER	REPRESENTATION	Yes No

LOGLINES

Tracker In the Montana territory in 1877, a Tracker, a drop-out from society, now a mountain man, rescues an Indian boy from sheer death, forcing him to enter corrupt and racist town.

May '68

In the global upheaval of 1868, a disillusioned American baseball player and a determined Parisian writer are drawn together as anti-war protests, personal loss, and a dangerous search for truth pull them from New York to Vietnam—forcing them to confront their beliefs, their pasts, and a love tested by revolution.

38 Minutes (aka Nuclear Dreams) by DH and Doug Stark

When a nuclear attack alert announces 38 minutes to impact, three women in three countries—a Russian journalist who risks everything for the truth, an American teacher haunted by inherited dreams, and a teenage girl finding her voice—are thrust onto parallel paths that reveal the power of courage in a world on the brink.

RECOMMEND

☐ CONSIDER

☐ PASS

Italian Cine Mag - May '68 Best Screenplay

"...and finally, I would like to focus on a narrative that is not yet a film, which we hope will become a film someday: the screenplay by the American writer and filmmaker Duffy Hecht entitled May 1968. The work was the absolute winner in the Screenplay section of the FilmFestival of 2017 from a total of over 250 screenplays.

The story is partially autobiographical, as the author told us:

You've asked about parallels in the screenplay to my own life. I remember the date May 1968 very well. I was preparing for my high school graduation in NYC and was chosen to give the commencement speech to the students when I heard Bobby Kennedy had been murdered. The next day, during my speech, I remember stumbling when I mentioned the murder and his brother's eulogy. That moment became the last scene of the movie. The words of Ted Kennedy's eulogy have stayed with me my whole life. In a way they sum up the peace message of the movie and what I wanted to say in writing the script about a world that could have been: "He was simply, a good and decent man who saw wrong and tried to right it, saw suffering and tried to heal it, saw war and tried to stop it."

May '68 is a film that absolutely should be shot. Because when you read the script, and close your eyes, you do not just see the sentences you read, but the scenes of the film and the struggles of May 1968, the dreams and the hopes, the love between the main characters Joe and Dariel, death and life."

CELEBS I'VE MET

ANOTHER TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE...

(If you hate name dropping, skip this one)

I'm often asked if I know any celebrities. Here are a some that I met over the years.

The 2 all-time greatest: Nat King Cole and Ray Charles.

When I was around 15 years old, I was with my dad at his office at Columbia Studios and he said come on, et's go downstairs and meet someone. So we took the elevator down to Jonie Tap's office who opened a door into another smaller office and there was Nat King Cole playing the music from my dad's movie Cat Ballou. I stayed cool, I think, but it's still one of the great moments of my life.

About 20 years later I got to know Jeff Pevar a fantastic guitar player who played with everyone including Ray Charles. Jeff invited me to their show and afterwards he asked if I wanted to see their touring bus and there was Ray who made some cutting remarks about Jeff because they were friends and then I got to say hi and hang out for a bit. Ray Charles probably the greatest of all time.

How about The Beatles? Nothing direct but two related moments.

The first was at a party at Jimmy Webb's (Wichita Lineman, Up, Up and Away). My sister was best friends with his wife so I got to tag along and at the party was Ringo, Harry Nielsen, Mickey Dolenz and a few others.

The other "Beatle" moment was backstage at the Universal Amphitheater. I was hanging out with Julian Lennon's guitarist and Julian came by to say hi.

In London I met David Gilmour. I was with Seymour and we were putting on a concert to promote the new amp line. The band on stage was James Burton and Albert Lee (reunion of Emmylou's Hot Band - Ooh Las Vegas). In the balcony before he went on for the encore, was Gilmour. We talked a little bit about his place on the Thames and his famous #1 Strat. Only a few years before I was listening to Ummagumma in Berkeley with my friends on our way to seeing Pink Floyd at Pepperland so this was a very big thrill for me.

More movie people:

Growing up, I met a lot of movie people through my Dad.

I have home movies of Burt Lancaster practicing the bull whip in our backyard for their movie The Kentuckian.

A few years after Houdini, Tony Curtis came over to our house on Foothill and showed me some magic tricks (and how he did one).

In London one summer, on pre-production of *The Devil's Disciple*, we went out to the home of Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. At one point, she took me out to her barn and showed how to milk a cow. A unique moment with Scarlet O'Hara.

Much later I got to meet Lee Marvin when I drove my Dad to the airport for the Berlin Film Festival, which btw I got in with a movie of my own some years later. At the airport, Lee Marvin and the director Elliot Silverstein were in a feud with my Dad so they were in separate groups and not talking but no matter what I got to say hi to Lee Marvin who I remember as larger than life, a movie star with a real aura (btw, they won in Berlin that year for *Cat Ballou*).

I got to know the great director John Frankenheimer. One summer when I was about 15 and I was out from New York visiting my Dad, and John drove up in his Ferrari, flipped me the keys and said take it for a drive. I didn't even have a license. Another cool man with an unmistakable aura.

My first job in the movie industry was doing research for Michael Mann. One afternoon I dropped off a script at his house where he lived with his wife Summer Mann which I still think is one of the most beautiful names I've ever heard.

Though my Dad I met some of Hollywood's most legendary writers like Waldo Salt, Frank Pearson, JP Miller, Guy Trosper and Paddy Chayefsky (faint memory, I was so young). I knew Waldo for years as Walter Davenport, his blacklist name. He was staying at my Dad's place on Wilshire Blvd during my parent's divorce. Waldo wrote some truly terrible movies for my Dad like *Taras Bulba* and *Flight From Ashiya* but was capable of masterpieces like *Coming Home* and *Midnight Cowboy*.

More music people:

Seymour and I went to Jeff Beck's party in London for his girlfriend's birthday. The Yardbirds were the house band, Keith Richards came with his dad, Eric Clapton was there and so was a beautiful broadcaster from the BBC who I tried to chat up but wouldn't have anything to do with me.

Among the friendliest and nicest musicians I got to meet were Peter Frampton (at the China Club), John Fogerty (sent me a Hallmark card thanking me for helping him with some pickup choices) and Jimmy Messina (a perfectionist) who took me out to dinner at The Paradise in Santa Barbara.

I got to know Jack Sonni, the rhythm guitarist in Dire Straits. Jack introduced me to Mark Knopfler after their show at the SB Bowl. I first met Jack when I was in sales at Seymour's and he was manager of Rudy's Music in NYC. He loved talking music, a big fan of T Rex. At a party one night at our friend Ziggy's, Jack told me what he considered the greatest piece of music

ever written: the last track on Kind of Blue by Miles Davis, Flamingo Sketches, because of the space Bill Evans left between the notes. RIP Jack.

Overall, the better the musician the nicer guy like James Burton, Albert Lee, Peter Frampton and Chuck Rainey. The worst were the ones coming up with big egos like Night Ranger.

Among the most fun times I ever had was when my bandmate Joady and I went up to visit his brother Arlo at his place in the Berkshires. Arlo was a super nice, charismatic guy. We went on the road with him into a recording studio (the Rolling Stones were just leaving) and then on the road for a few of his shows. He had a great band but not much of a crew - I ended up carrying the drums off stage somewhere back East.

I met Johnny Winter backstage at a small LA club, handed him a special mini-humbucker for his Firebird which he had to hold up right in front of his eye, as an albino he could barely see.

I met Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble before their show at UCSB. And Kevin Dukes at SIR right before he went out with Billy Joel to Russia. And Los Lobos gave me a shout out from the stage at the Arlington. I ran into Cesar and Dave Hidalgo at Nadine's in LA.

Enough? Not enough? Send me a note on the contact page and I'll write back with a remembrance of any of the extraordinary people below who I was lucky enough to meet and sometimes work with.... like John Carpenter, one of the nicest of all.

Movies: David Mamet, Bill Macy, Ron Livingston, Ray Bradbury, Bob Clark, Haskell Wexler, Bronislaw Kaper, Jim Lampley, Robert Mitchum, Ron Shelton, Roger Corman, Delbert Mann, Ernest Borgnine, Charles Bronson, EG Marshall, George Chakiris, Brad Dexter, George Wendt, Joe Mantegna, Julia Stiles and Bokeem Woodbine.

Music: Carlos Santana, Paul Reed Smith, Billy Gibbons, Joe Walsh, David Lindley, Ray Brown, David Bromberg, B.B. King, Viv Campbell, Buck Dharma, Jesse Colin Young, Jamie Shane, Lee Ritenour, Les McCann, Neil Stubenhaus, Jerry Donahue, Paul Pesco, Glen Phillips and Jo-El Sonnier of New Orleans who put a curse on me because I wouldn't give him all the pickups he wanted.

MY SHOW BIZ FAMILY

Harold Hecht (father)



(Burt Lancaster, Ernest Borgnine, HH)



(with his good friend film composer, Bronislaw Kaper)

Academy Award winning producer for Marty
- Best Picture 1955 (I have his Oscar).

Here is a link to his many credits including the
remarkable Sweet Smell Of Success.

www.imdb.com/name/nm0372959/

Gloria Buzzell (mother)

After graduating college at Wellesley, she worked for literary agent Audrey Wood, whose clients included Tennessee Williams and William Inge. Marlon Brando would stop by the office.



(My Mom and Uncle Eddie)

Edward Buzzell (Uncle Eddie)

Vaudeville and stage star, Uncle Eddie directed films including *Go West* with the Marx Brothers and *Song of the Thin Man* with William Powell and Myrna Loy. He was part of the Friday lunch table at Hillcrest Country Club with close friends George Jessel, George Burns and Al Jolson.

Samuel Jesse Buzzell (Grandfather)



(DH and Sam Grandpa)



(with composer and bandleader, Duke Ellington)

NYC attorney who represented Cab Calloway, Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, The Mills Brothers, and many other popular composers.

Lu Ann Simms (Aunt)

Popular singer in the 1950's. I saw her performing on American Bandstand. Lu Ann toured with Elvis Presley and was one of the original stars on the Arthur Godfrey Show.



(Lu Ann with my Uncle Loring)

Harold Hecht Jr (half-brother)

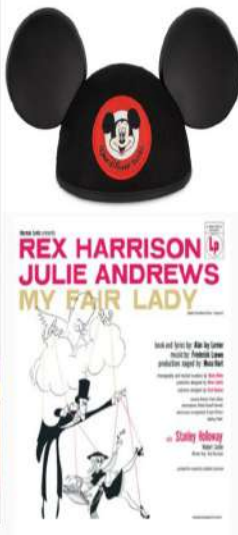


Three-time Emmy winning Sports producer.

Top ranked Tennis Pro.

Former assistant to movie director John Frankenheimer.

A FEW MORE SCENES...



Tokyo, 1963: Dad woke me up in our hotel in Tokyo. We were there for pre-production on *Flight From Ashiya*. "Let's go," he said. "Where?" "The Tokyo fish market; they're setting up." At 5 AM, we had raw fish and strong tea. It was the first time I'd ever heard of sushi, long before it came to America.

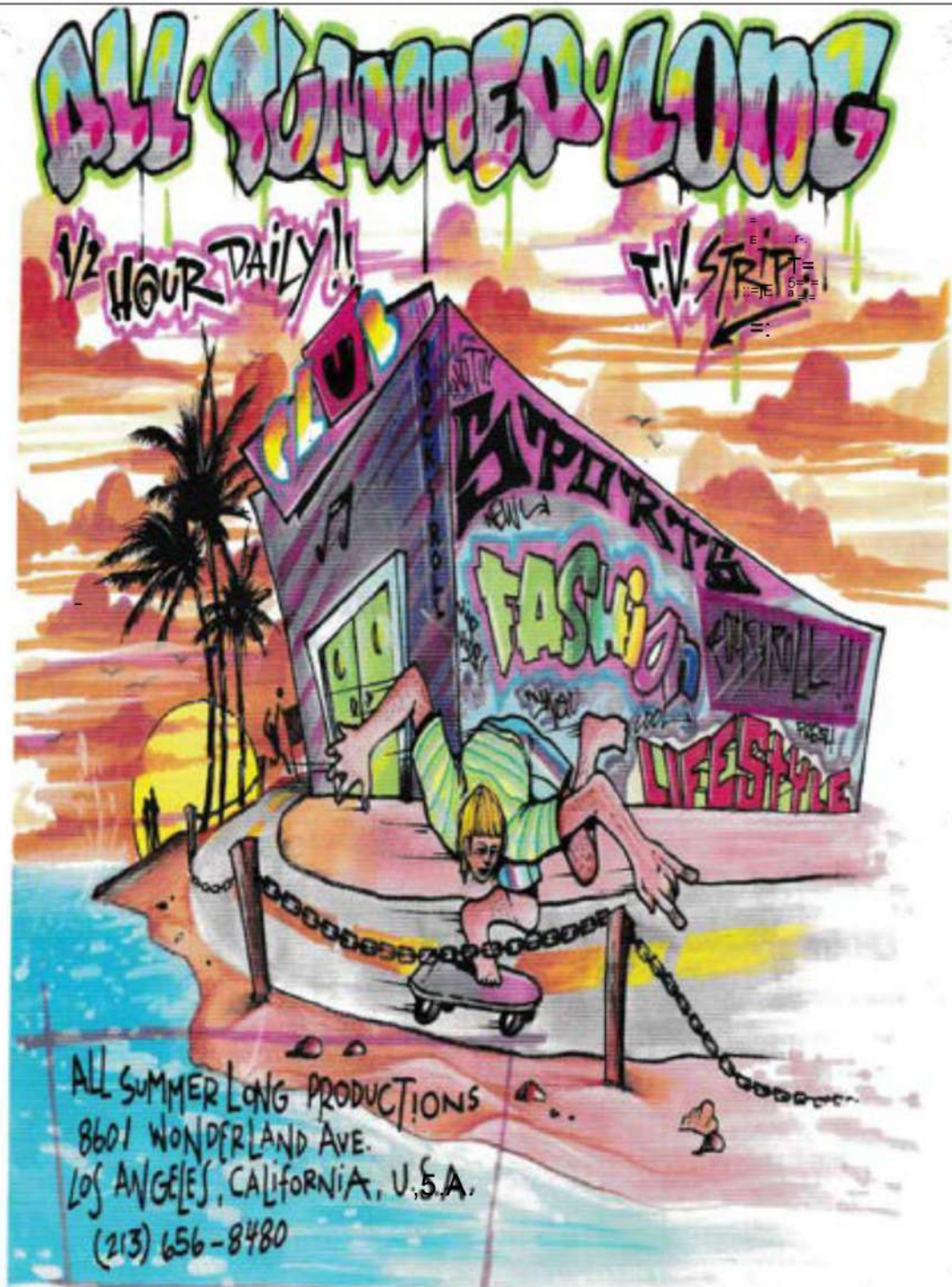
South of France, 1965: During my sophomore year of high school, my friend Jonathan invited me to Europe. His dad, a celebrated cookbook author, needed to do some research. So, I spent a couple of months at his friend Julia Child's house, La Pitchoune, in the south of France. Nice kitchen! One night, I heard Dylan's "*Desolation Row*" on the outlaw Radio Caroline – a life-changing moment for me.

Sunset Strip, 2000-2001: During these years, Harold Jr. and I frequently met with John Carpenter at Hamburger Hamlet on the Sunset Strip. We were working to get one more Hecht-Lancaster production off the ground, and Joanna Lancaster had given us her approval. The project was "*The Dreamers*," with a script by Ray Bradbury based on Roger Manvell's novel. John was wonderful company and a fantastic storyteller. He even invited us to his son's birthday party at a Los Angeles recording studio, where Steve Cropper and Duck Dunn led the house band.

Walt Disney Studio, 8:00 AM 2006: Another project that got incredibly close was with Gary Foster (*Sleepless In Seattle*) and Ron Shelton (*Bull Durham*, *Tin Cup*). "*Count 3 and Pray*" was a modern-day western. Disney gave us a development deal, Ron, Christian Darren and Mitch Kapner wrote drafts but after a couple of years, they put it into turnaround.

London / Broadway, 1950s-1960s: I was extremely fortunate to see some truly great plays and amazing performers on London's West End and Broadway. Highlights included *My Fair Lady* with Julie Andrews and Rex Harrison, *The Music Man* with Robert Preston, *Gypsy* with Ethel Merman, *Hair* (after its move to Broadway), and *Bye-Bye Birdie* with its original cast. My most memorable: *Cabaret* with Joel Grey.

THIS GRAPHIC IS FOR A TV PILOT I CO-PRODUCED WITH HEMDALE
(PLATOON, THE LAST EMPEROR)
IT'S FROM A NAPTE SHOW IN NEW ORLEANS



Under construction · Coming soon
Three Screenplays · Click to read

TRACKER

story and screenplay
by Duffy Hecht

38 MINUTES

(AKA NUCLEAR DREAMS)

DUFFY HECHT and DOUGLAS STARK



[VIEW SCRIPT
\(POP\)](#)

MAY '68

DARE TO
STRUGGLE,
DARE TO WIN