



## eQ and Pablo create formidable ROI For Goldcrest Post

New York high flyers take off with Quantel DI and post technology



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Goldcrest Post Production first expanded into HD finishing post services in 2004. The company, based in New York's Greenwich Village, jumped head first into the business by purchasing a Quantel HD eQ editing/ effects/ grading/ deliverables system, configured with the powerful QColor in-context color correction option.

Integrating vertically with Goldcrest's established niche in providing a filmmaker community-friendly facility of offline, sound editorial, mixing, foley and screening services, the then new HD and DI infrastructure was designed to meet the exacting demands of feature filmmaking and delivery. The addition of a DI theater, housing the eQ, introduced New York to the creative leap forward of performing both online finishing and color correction with large screen digital projection.

Today the company lays claim to two eQs, the second a 4:4:4 RGB system, and its newest powerhouse, the Quantel Pablo on iQ 2K.

"When I first came to this facility we acquired an HD eQ system for doing television series work and independent features," said Tim Spitzer, Managing Director, Goldcrest Post Production. "The Quantel system was the only editing/color correction system appropriate for delivering an uncompromised quality

DI to the New York marketplace. The system is uniquely suited to work with mixed resolution and frame rate material common to projects often integrating mixed media of HD, DV, and material shot on 35mm or Super 16mm."

### 2eQs + Pablo on iQ 2K equals serious ROI

As the volume of DI work increased, the company expanded into getting an eQ RGB 4:4:4 machine also outfitted with the QColor in-context grading package. The company continues to finish television series on the HD eQ. For a number of those series projects Spitzer said Goldcrest took the unique steps of training client editors on the system so that the client editors could now conform and color correct in HD. This allowed their clients to migrate from SD to HD finishing, utilizing the talent pool they were already comfortable with, while providing a much more powerful toolset.

Right: DI editor and finishing artist Peter Heady at the controls of one of Goldcrest's two eQ systems.



Right: stills from Home Front, shot DV and given the film look on Goldcrest's eQ by John Dowdell.



*First Born* is a psychological thriller about a New York modern dancer who after learning that she is pregnant gives up her career and leaves the city for what she hopes will be a bucolic life with her husband. After moving into a beautiful three-bedroom mansion in an up-market New York suburb, the couple soon encounter strange happenings that send the wife into a state of agitation that ultimately tests her abilities as a new mother. With elements of a classic haunted house movie coupled with hints of witchcraft, *First Born* is an adult thriller in the vein of *Rosemary's Baby* and with the tone of *The Others*.

“The ability to network share on our 2K projects between the eQ 4:4:4 RGB machine and the Pablo provides invaluable time savings,” said Peter Heady. I was able to conform and do effects work on one system, review with the client, and then push work in the background to colorist John Dowdell working on the Pablo in the color correct theater.”

In *First Born*, directed by Isaac Webb, starring Elisabeth Shue, and produced by Elevation Filmworks, 2K DPX scans were submitted on Hard Drives from the TCS in New York and special effects were submitted as Cineon files from Invisible in Toronto.

Goldcrest mounted the client drives on the Pablo suite, and using QXMLClick! – a GUI for Quantel’s QXMLNet utilities, pulled in all the appropriate files. Heady performed the data online and John Dowdell utilized the Pablo to do the color correction for DI film recording and output to HD screeners for bi-coastal and international distributor screenings.

“The system’s concurrent rendering is a blessing and the speed is phenomenal,” said renowned colorist, Dowdell. “The ability to play out 2K files in realtime for client screenings, without having to spend time with long renders before hand, is unmatched by any

Right: Director of Imaging Technology John Dowdell taking a well-earned break from wrangling the DI bonanza at Goldcrest.



Right: The Feldbusch family feature in Home Front by Award Winning documentary filmmaker Richard Hankin.



technology out there today. Our clients wait for nothing!”

### Silk purses

In the movie Home Front, directed by Richard Hankin, the film asks the question, “What happens when the troops come home from the Iraq war? *Home Front* captures the human story of Sergeant Jeremy Feldbusch – a seriously injured Army Ranger – over the course of a year as he readjusts to family, community – and most importantly, his new, altered self.

*Home Front* was shot primarily on 24 frame DV, but also incorporated a variety of 30 frame stock elements and high resolution graphics. The film was conformed in 23.98 HD on the eQ by Heady for creating film-out, HD and SD deliverables in both NTSC and PAL.

The challenge in grading the DV feature was to give it a filmic look. The edited footage, although beautifully shot, exhibited the artifacts associated with DV capture. The highlights were clipped and adjacent image details comprised harsh transitions of grey scale. Most of the images were de-saturated and one dimensional in contrast.

The movie was color graded in the DI Theater utilizing eQ with QColor. The SD resolution was converted in realtime by the eQ and projected as 24P on a large screen utilizing Dark Chip DLP technology.

“Dowdell qualified various levels of the highlights and with Quantel imaging tools blurred the key, shrunk and enlarged the key channel and slightly defocused the highlight transitions,” said Spitzer. “Color balance, contrast and saturation were added

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John Dowdell  
Director of Imaging Technology at Goldcrest

Right: Sergeant Jeremy Feldbusch, the subject of the poignant movie *Home Front*.



as a cascade layer on top of the highlight processed layer. The resulting images took on a film capture appearance. Visually speaking, the imaging tools of Quantel help colorists turn a sow's ear into a silk purse.”

Upcoming projects at Goldcrest Post Production include HD finishing of a 35mm feature *Hope and a Little Sugar*, 2k DI restoration of two features including opticals, dust-busting, and grading; and re-mastering six Goldcrest Films International/ titles for video release.

Right: Laura (Elizabeth Shue) in *First Born*, for which Goldcrest completed the DI in just a week-and-a-half.



“What’s remarkable is the work we have done on the eQs has allowed us to build a full 2k and HD DI infrastructure – enough to purchase the Pablo on iQ 2K out of cash flow,” said Spitzer. “The Quantel systems have allowed us to service our series clients with our third season of HD finishing, as well as build a reputation as the favorite DI facility in New York – an outstanding return on investment in just a year-and-half’s time.”

Concentrating specifically on the editorial and color correction part of filmmaking, the company felt the Quantel platform met most of the criteria for the type of service Goldcrest wanted to provide. According to Spitzer, the systems had proven to be the most powerful tools in the industry for tackling both longform and shortform editing at any resolution. “The eQ allowed us to structure a business based on the only new business model appropriate to New York.”

### Staying busy

Goldcrest is fortunate to enjoy a full pipeline of projects and a roster of happy clients who have grown accustomed to the productivity and speed of the Quantel systems. In the last two months the facility has finished eight features.

Peter Heady, Goldcrest’s DI editor and finishing artist, was responsible for the editorial of these films, while the Color Correction was done either by Peter or colorist John Dowdell. The films include: *Premium*, *Night of the White Pants*, *The Killer Within*, *Home Front*, *Goal Dreams*, *Forgiveness*, and the films *First Born* and *Shortbus*. *First Born* and *Shortbus* were the first two projects to be finished in 2K on the Pablo.

“Normally the DI process is a 3 to 4 week process but *First Born* was done in a week-and-a-half on the Pablo,” said Spitzer.

Right: Peter Heady grades “SHOWbusiness” on the eQ.

