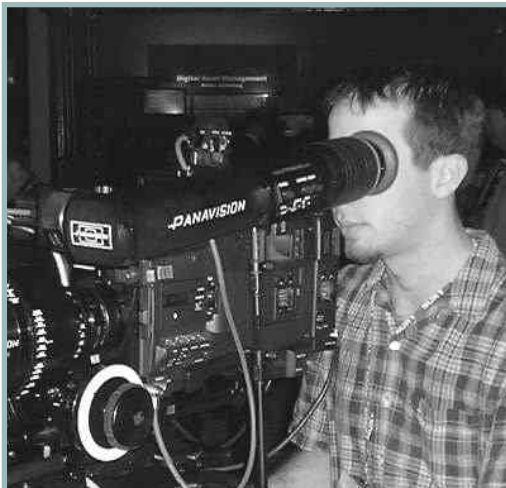


**W**hat was supposed to be a 300-hour practicum project for 5 Radio and television Arts students turned into a groundbreaking and highly successful high definition television production. Martin Gero and Ryan Hays, now graduates of Ryerson's Radio and Television Arts program are two production members of the recently completed dramatic HDTV project "Perfecte." "We had a hunch that it was going to turn out," jokes Gero, "but what has happened has truly surpassed our expectations."

Gero may be joking, but considering the success of Perfecte to date, he and the other members of the team have much to talk about. Perfecte is the first dramatic HDTV pilot produced as a practicum project when they were in the last year of the RTA program. Being trailblazers, Gero and Hays had to find their own solutions to problems that would arise.

Since Ryerson lacked the infrastructure to conduct such an undertaking Gero and Hays had to arrange partnerships both inside and outside the University in order to produce the project. "It was literally two days before we had to do our final HD edit, and we had no where to do it." Says Gero. "We were petrified, but at the last possible moment one of three places we'd been begging to give us an on-line came through."

Gero and Hays were fortunately blessed with a string of good luck and enjoyed the backing of the Rogers Communications Centre. "The RCC was the banner under which we presented ourselves," says Hays. "They



*Martin Gero at the National Association of Broadcasters Conference*

## THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF INTEREST AND WE'RE CONFIDENT

## THAT PERFECTE CAN BE MADE INTO A SUCCESSFUL TELEVISION SERIES

helped us more than they needed to, and their reputation for quality just made it that much easier for us to get corporate co-operation and offers of assistance."

In order to complete the production, Gero and Hays extended Ryerson's base knowledge in this medium to include several technological advances and developments. To shoot the production they worked directly with SONY of Canada and made arrangements to shoot using SONY's HDCam format. In the end, several post-production systems were developed, including an HDTV compositing system. The bulk of the content was edited on HDCam videotape using Eyes Post's in house HDCam editing system. For the compositing, they cooperated with Eyeon Software and Boxx technologies, employing Digital Fusion HD (High Definition) compositing in the postproduction process. Digital Fusion is the main compositing software employed at Ryerson in RTA and Image Arts.

In addition to the video content, the audio was produced and mixed in Dolby 5.1 surround sound using the studio located in the Rogers Communications Centre. Perfecte was premiered in the Rogers Communications Centre's Eaton Theatre last April. For the opening night Perfecte was able to arrange a SONY high definition projector and the accompanying surround sound system to be installed in the theatre specifically for the show.

Gero is a firm believer that HDTV can be used successfully for dramatic productions. "Right now is just the beginning of what will eventually be very popular format," he says. Since leaving Ryerson, Perfecte has been exhibited at the National Association of Broadcasters conference in Las Vegas earlier and has been highlighted at the prestigious Banff International Television Festival in June. And there's more good news. Perfecte has attracted the attention of television broadcasters, as well as industry conferences. "We've entered into a development deal with a Canadian broadcaster that will be announced later this year." Says Gero with a smile on his face.

The Perfecte team are grateful for the support offered by Sony of Canada, eyeon Software, Boxx Technologies, Intergraph Computers, Eyes Post, PS Production Services and the Rogers Communications Centre. •