



By Carol Patton

Kay Studios and Rhode Island Host Warner Premiere's Production of THE CLIQUE

When Alloy Entertainment determined they would set *THE CLIQUE*, the first of what could be several (as many as twelve) of Lisi Harrison's best selling novels in Rhode Island, the next step was production offices, crew, locations, etc. At that time Line Producer Tom Keniston brought Production Coordinator Mathew Provost to the table. Provost remembered seeing that Kay Studios had space, offices, parking and industry connections in the marketplace. It was a new relationship that Provost will not soon forget. And one that made his job easier. I visited Kay Studios in East Providence and Quonset Point, RI where I set down with Mathew Provost to have a chat.

Provost was enthusiastic about how quickly everything came together. Immediately (in two days), offices were designated and assigned, office furniture was put in place, every piece of office equipment that a production requires was in place available to rent and they have a kitchen. And what's more Marcus Thomas and Greg Gormley, Managing Partners of Kay Studios, had a handle on local vendors and industry connections meaning dependable caterers and a reliable car service company. The production slid in for three months.

Mathew Provost and his wife had worked in Rome, LA, Calgary, Vancouver, and Santa Fe before deciding to make Rhode Island their home base. Since here he's worked on CBS' *Waterfront* in Providence, *THE WOMEN* in Boston, and now *THE CLIQUE* back in Rhode Island near Quonset Point with locations shooting all over.

According to Provost working with Thomas and Gormley has made amazing contributions to the production because they understand the business and have all the answers readily available for visiting productions. The pair has just added an additional 27,000 sq. ft. of office space to their Quonset Point location bringing it to a total of 85,000 square feet, which includes a 30,000 sq. ft. clear span, high ceiling studio, a 20,000 sq ft mill/preproduction area, 37,000 sq. ft. of office space, and 5 acres of parking. This facility is large enough to house a \$100 million film or two smaller ones.

THE CLIQUE is based on a Lisi Harrison story. Her novels have sold more than 4.5 million copies in the United States. It's about a group of 12-year olds who think their pretty and pretty neat. In fact they call themselves "The Pretty Committee." According to Michael Lembeck, *THE CLIQUE*'s Emmy award-winning director (*Friends*, *THE SANTA CLAUSE 2*, *THE SANTA CLAUSE 3: THE ESCAPE CLAUSE*), "As far as I'm concerned, this is all about being your genuine, authentic self, and -- if you're not -- the negative consequences that eventually will result." It's great fodder for the younger teen set.

"The question for these girls is: are they willing to pay for things they do and say?" Lembeck added. "In a word, it's called 'fronting,' which means exhibiting false behavior in order to feel superior to others. As a result, they have no friends but each other. Then



above
Kay Studios show off their new cyclorama built in their East Providence Studio. Photo by Michael Day.

Production Coordinator Mathew Provost and Carol Patton at Kay Studios near Quonset Point, RI home of *THE CLIQUE* production offices. There's a golf course right outside the side door, just slip through the kitchen and your there. There's an airport nearby as well. An IMAGINE photo.

there's a move into the neighborhood by a very authoritative girl who acts and dresses her own way. In short, that new girl has to decide, 'Do I change to become accepted?' or 'Do I remain true to myself?' It's pretty fascinating material," Lembeck said.

Harrison's novels have spent more than 120 weeks on The New York Times bestseller list. Scriptwriter Liz Tigelaar (*Dirty Sexy Money*, *Brothers & Sisters*, *Dawson Creek*) fell in love with Harrison's works and went to Warner Brothers to pursue the idea as a set of features based on the characters.

With Warner Premiere distributing and Alloy Entertainment as the producing partner, *THE CLIQUE*, will go directly to DVD with a "street date" (translate release date) of November 11, 2008, just in time for lucrative Christmas sales according to one of *THE CLIQUE*'s producers, Alloy Entertainment's Bob Levy, Executive Vice President of Film and Television Development and Production. Direct to DVD distribution has come into its own with most major studios now producing a "line" of them with specialty labels. Warner Premiere, of course, belongs to Warner Bros. Producing along with Levy are Alloy Entertainment President Leslie Morgenstein and Tyra Banks.

Levy's career has spanned network, cable, and public television. He joined Alloy En-



above
Unit still taken on the set of *The Clique* Set. Photo courtesy of Eric Lee.

Kay Studios at Quonset Point hosts *THE CLIQUE* for Warner Premiere. Photo by Marcus Thomas.

right, top to bottom
THE CLIQUE Production Office at Kay Studios. Photo by Marcus Thomas.

The Mill Area at Kay Studios at Quonset Point. The studio now has 85,000 sq. ft. of studios, offices, and preproduction space. Photo by Marcus Thomas.

Kay Studios has 27,000 sq. ft. of office space, enough for a \$100 million film. Photo by Marcus Thomas.



ertainment in 2001 following ten years at NBC, where he was the Vice President of Prime-time Series and closely involved with such series as *Mad About You*, *Caroline in the City*, and the critically acclaimed *Working*. As head of Alloy Entertainment's West Coast office, Levy oversees the company's extensive slate of film and television development. Levy is also an Executive Producer of the new CW series *Gossip Girl* and all of Alloy Entertainment's television projects. He holds a bachelor's degree cum laude from Brown University and says, 'working on *THE CLIQUE* in Rhode Island has been like a homecoming before he comes back to Rhode Island in May for his 25th reunion.' At that time he hopes to catch up with one of his classmates, Providence Mayor David Cicillene.

The 5 - 6 stars are all from LA. Mostly they are 14-year old girls playing 12-year olds. None of them have ever been to Rhode Island and it is exciting for them to be in the Ocean State. They provide a lot of energy, vitality, and enthusiasm on the set, dancing and singing between takes and they couldn't be having more fun. It's contagious say crew members. The production found their male lead through a New York casting office and hopes to tap into the acting pool up and down the eastern seaboard for future roles. The majority of extras were from Rhode Island as more than half of the crew including

the heads of the Make-up and Hair Design, Joe Rossi and Frank Barbosa. Both liked the idea of being able to drive home after a long day's work.

According to Levy two more stories are slated for development at this year. While there are no firm plans at this time, the hope is to come back to Rhode Island. And why not, he says, "Rhode Island is physically beautiful, lends itself to cinematic visuals, and the local crews performed beautifully." Our location at Main Street's Hope Artiste Village in Pawtucket provided absolutely the best back drop for our young teen shoppers. *Bratfest at Tiffany's* is one of the titles in the immediate plan. Needless to say, everyone is interested in how the first couple fare. If the girls who bought the books buy the DVDs, it stands to reason the DVDs will sell well.

Rhode Island Film Office Director, Steven Feinberg, is credited by Levy as a magnanimous and knowledgeable host, "he helped close the deal for us to come here," Bob Levy said.

Carol Patton is the Founder and Publisher of IMAGINE, which covers Film, Television, and New Media Production in New England and advocates for the industry.