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## VES Summit: Department Heads "Should Start and Finish at the Same Time"

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### "I'm going into post for free, out of friendship and loyalty — and self-preservation"

It's not unusual for department heads to be hired onto features at different times, but these productions can benefit — creatively and likely with cost savings — if they join forces at the same time so that they can get involved, plan and collaborate, starting in prepro. That was the message of a panel at the Visual Effects Society Production Summit.

Speaking Saturday at the W Hollywood, Oscar-winning VFX supervisor and CEO of Magnopus **Ben Grossmann** (*Hugo*) asserted that, as digital tools such as those used for virtual cinematography and previs continue to create a blurring of the lines between disciplines, live-action filmmakers should adopt a workflow more along the lines of animation. "There's no separation between production and post in animation," he said. "The new 'let's get it all in camera' is getting all the creativity in one unified vision."

"Workflow would be simultaneous in an ideal world," agreed Oscar nominated production designer **Bo Welch** (*Men in Black*). "Production designers are often dropped at the end of production and then things change in editing or VFX. Ideally, you'd be brought into post."

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"But it boils down to money," he added. "I'm going into post for free, out of friendship and loyalty — and self-preservation. Everyone should start and finish at the same time."

Oscar winning cinematographer **Dion Beebe** -- who lensed upcoming *Into the Woods* -- emphasized that it is "ridiculous" that the postproduction process of digital color grading is often separated from the cinematographer. "It's not separate," he asserted. "I can't understand how cinematographers are often not invited to the DI [digital intermediate, where the color grading is completed]. We are collecting data, and what you can do with the data is endless. It's a deal breaker; I won't do a job unless I'm paid to be in the DI suite."

VFX pioneer and director of photography **Bill Taylor** moderated the discussion.

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