



TV and Documentary Production Advisor and On-Air Contributor

Former NASA Mission Leader | Realism, Narrative Clarity, and High-Stakes Context

Overview

Television and documentary productions involving complex systems do not lose credibility in obvious ways. They lose it in small details, unclear explanations, and moments that do not hold up under scrutiny.

Mike Ciannilli is a former NASA mission leader who works across television, streaming, and documentary productions as both a technical advisor and on-camera contributor. He ensures spaceflight and high-stakes operational content is accurate, understandable, and consistent with how real missions unfold.

He works from early concept through post-production, helping teams make practical decisions that maintain realism, support the story, and hold up for informed audiences.



Contact

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Production Integration

Story and Content Development

- Strengthens story tension by grounding it in real operational constraints
- Works with producers and research teams to shape storylines that reflect how events actually unfold
- Translates complex spaceflight concepts into clear narrative elements that audiences can follow
- Identifies technical assumptions that would not hold under real mission conditions

On-Set and Production Collaboration

- Works directly with showrunners, directors, and crew to maintain realism during filming
- Advises on staging, blocking, and environment so scenes reflect real mission operations
- Guides placement of consoles, equipment, cables, and workflows to match actual control room and field conditions
- Reviews playback to confirm scenes will align with visual effects, timelines, and mission sequence logic
- Ensures interactions with controls, communication systems, and procedures are accurate on camera
- Identifies details that would break credibility and corrects them in real time
- Provides immediate, practical direction that keeps production moving without compromising accuracy

Actor and Performance

- Prepares actors to move, speak, and react as professionals in high-stakes operational environments
- Coaches timing, communication style, and physical interaction with equipment
- Corrects technical behavior that would feel inauthentic to informed audiences
- Provides context that supports grounded, credible performance under pressure

On-Camera Contribution

- Delivers clear, direct commentary grounded in real mission experience
- Explains complex systems in a way that is understandable without oversimplifying
- Provides technical explanation and operational context that supports audience understanding
- Engages naturally with hosts and contributors to build trust and credibility on screen
- Adapts delivery across live broadcast, recorded segments, and international formats

Post-Production and Editorial Support

- Reviews cuts for technical accuracy, continuity, and operational realism
- Identifies where sequence, timing, or detail affects audience understanding
- Advises on edits where realism impacts clarity or credibility
- Supports alignment between filmed footage, voiceover, and visual effects
- Contributes to development of promotional clips and supporting content

Media and Promotion Support

- Participates in interviews, panels, and audience-facing events tied to production releases
- Works with communications teams to ensure accuracy and consistency in messaging
- Supports pre-release positioning and post-release media engagement
- Provides commentary that reinforces credibility across broadcast and digital platforms

Selected Experience

- *CBS Mornings (CBS)*: provided live, conversational commentary with host, combining technical insight with clear audience framing
- *The Strange Truth – "The Day the Sky Fell" (National Geographic)*: delivered on-camera narrative and supported research and story development
- **Nippon TV (Japan)**: provided live translated commentary, adapting technical content for international audiences
- *The Bermuda Triangle: Into Cursed Waters (The History Channel)*: advised on story development, script review, set preparation, and on-camera interaction, and supported promotion and media rollout
- **NASA TV**: provided on-air commentary and worked with production and editorial teams on content and shot planning
- *Cake Boss (Discovery/TLC)*: delivered accessible space-related expertise within an entertainment format



Working Style

- Operates effectively in fast-paced production environments
- Communicates clearly with both technical and creative teams
- Focuses on practical solutions that support realism and production needs
- Builds trust quickly with hosts, producers, and crew

Availability

- Television and documentary advising
- On-camera commentary and subject matter contribution
- Story development and research collaboration
- On-set production support and post-production and editorial consultation
- Media and promotional appearances

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