

# GOTHAM

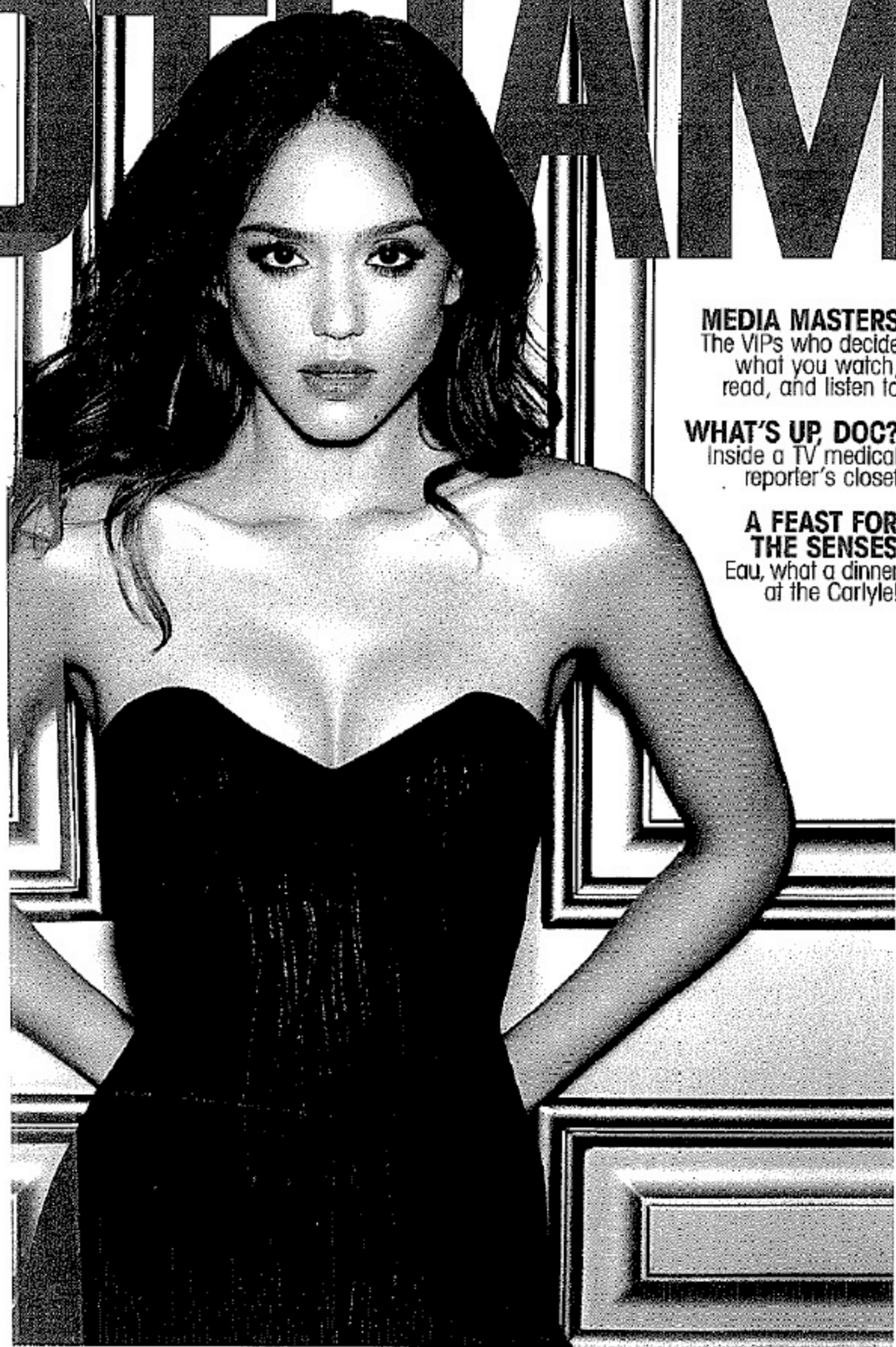
## The **Big** Nehst Thing

### POWER BIG BREAK

LARRY MEISTRICH founded the Shooting Gallery—an independent film-production company—with less than \$10,000 as a 24-year-old in 1990. During the decade he produced more than 100 commercials, music videos, and films, including the Academy Award-winner *Sling Blade*. After selling the operation in 2001, Meistrich started thinking about how he got his start—and realized that the path he'd taken no longer existed. "How do people get in now, when the industry is so tight-knit and when, without an agent from one of a handful of firms, you can't even get a meeting?" Meistrich wondered.

Seeing the opportunity to give people with no industry connections a chance to get a foot in the door, the New Jersey native founded Nehst Studios (pronounced *nehst*) last summer—this time with \$250 million in funding. Using the PitchNehst online portal for a nominal fee, would-be filmmakers can submit work directly to Meistrich's team. The company's ultimate goal is to create a network of web-based communities that cover every aspect of filmmaking—from casting to scoring a soundtrack to booking locations—providing a pool full of talent for the budding auteur to draw on. With a plan to focus on feature films and television content, Nehst also hopes to offer an unprecedented look at each step in the production process by way of the power and immediacy of the web. When it's time to cast the actors, for example, a posting will go out online, giving a kid in Nebraska with no agent the chance to send in his headshot.

The studio is taking part in strategic events all over the country and in Canada to reach a broad audience of hopefuls, and it seems to be working—Nehst has already acquired more than 30 projects, including a children's television series called *Drizzle Kick Thru* (the show is currently casting), and is developing a cartoon series with Darian Barnes of the New York Jets called *The Triumph League*. Visit [nehst.com](http://nehst.com) and [pitchnehst.com](http://pitchnehst.com). —TOM BOLGER



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