



# Back Story

*Twenty Feet from Stardom* is a documentary film that pays tribute to some of the top background singers in the business. Their names may not be well known, but their talents are instrumental to the success of the music, and sometimes exceed those of the stars. The same might be said of contemporary pit crews: Crew members only find themselves on a big screen close-up if there's a problem—a fuel stop that goes awry, a jammed wheel nut, or bodywork that won't go back into place. Even if it's a purely mechanical issue, all eyes shift to the technician or technicians responsible for getting the car back out there. A truly successful pit crew is anonymous because it's hardly ever on camera.

The Audi armada rolled into la Sarthe this year as a well-honed machine, a team that has set an incredibly high standard of pit work. Porsche's LMP1 team, by comparison, had far less experience. However, as the results would show after 24 hours, the 919 team proved it could not only go toe to toe with Audi's best, but beat Ingolstadt at its own game. Over a total of 90 pit stops, the trio of Porsches spent less time in the pits than the Audis. The 919s needed 1,986 liters of fuel and 116 tires to go 3,345 miles, in the process returning 40.5 gigabytes of data for analysis on the banks of computers in the team's operations center. As is always the case at Le Mans, the crew's work was an essential element of a historic victory. —*Kerry Morse*

PHOTO Camden Thrasher

CAMERA Nikon D4

LENS 70-200mm f/2.8

FOCAL LENGTH 190mm

APERTURE f22

SPEED 1/13 second

ISO 50