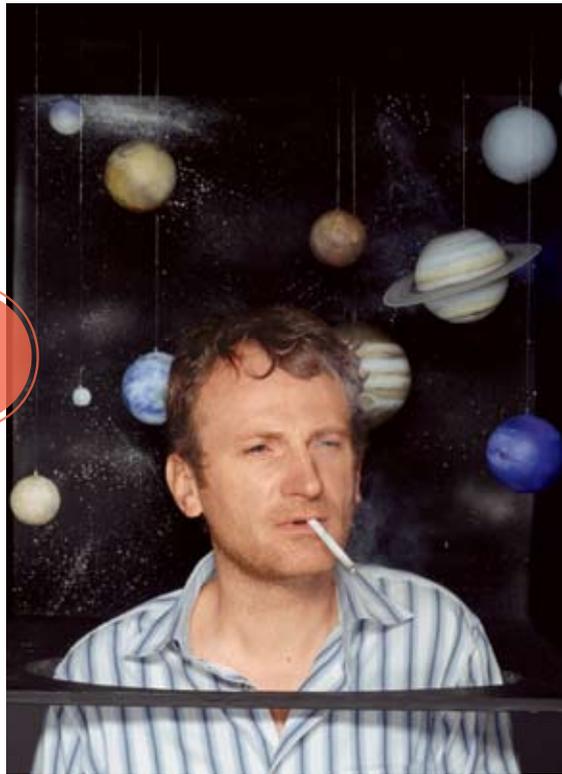


Contributors



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Contributing editor **David H. Freedman** followed Bob Cramer for nearly a year to report *Inc.*'s cover story, "The Secret Life of a Serial CEO" (page 80). Over that time, he watched Cramer lose some of his unbridled self-assurance and gain a little humility. "Bob is a very confident and optimistic person who's had nothing but successes in his life," says Freedman. "It was a little surprising that things started to take a turn for the worse." Freedman's 2007 book, *A Perfect Mess*, about why disorder is sometimes a good thing, comes out in paperback this month.



Photographer **Chris Buck** bonded with our cover subject, Bob Cramer, over a shared interest in the music business. "I think the photo editor was getting concerned, because we were using valuable shoot time discussing the structure of the music industry," he says. It was a challenging shoot. "We essentially had two images in the picture at once—one inside the restaurant and one out on the street," Buck says. "The difficulty is making sure people understand who the subject is." Buck, who lives in New York, has photographed notable figures from George W. Bush to Jerry Stiller, Donald Trump to David Byrne. He has shot for *GQ*, *New York*, and *Entertainment Weekly*.



Bobbie Gossage developed the feature that debuts in this issue: Behind the Scenes, a look at the small companies whose products and services are woven into everyday American life. For the inaugural Behind the Scenes (page 30), Gossage tracked down four companies that keep a Wendy's drive-through working. Gossage knows a little about fast food: She worked at McDonald's as a kid, in Kansas.



In "Political Animals" (page 23), **Clay Risen** profiles some of the entrepreneurs who have key roles in the 2008 presidential campaigns. "The candidate who has the best health care plan—that's going to be the candidate for small business," he says. Risen, who is the managing editor of the journal *Democracy*, is writing a book about the riots that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. He lives in Washington, D.C.



Rebecca Fannin talked with Chinese entrepreneur Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba.com, the huge online marketplace that went public last fall amid frequent comparisons to Google, for this month's How I Did It (page 104). "The story of Alibaba is a magical tale," Fannin says. "Not even J.K. Rowling could have imagined something like it." Fannin's book *Silicon Dragon: How China Is Winning the Tech Race* will be published this month. Fannin lives in New York City but often reports from Silicon Valley and China, where the above photo of her and Ma was taken.