

NYU graduates reach new career heights with **Afterschool**

Antonio Campos, Sean Durkin and Josh Mond founded Borderline Films a year before graduating from New York University's (NYU) Tisch School of the Arts in 2004. Soon afterwards, their first short film *Buy It Now* won the first place Cinefondation Award at the 2005 Cannes International Film Festival, and earned the Audience Award at the CineVegas International Film Festival. The three friends also direct and produce music videos and commercials. Most recently, their first full-length feature film, *Afterschool*, competed in the Un Certain Regard section of the 2008 Cannes festival. Campos wrote the screenplay in the fall of 2006, during the Cannes Residence Program. The cinematographer is Jody Lee Lipes, who had previously worked on projects with Durkin, Campos and Mond.

Afterschool follows a boy who witnesses the death of two sisters at his boarding school, and explores how he deals with the tragedy. "The film delves into how the lines between reality and the memory of the girls become gray when he creates an online memorial video about the girls," explains Campos, who also directed and edited the film.

Campos finalized the script in March 2007. Mond and Durkin realized that they either had to shoot it over the summer when students were out of session, or wait another year. They dove right in and chose Pomfret School in Connecticut for their location. It only took one conversation for Campos and Lipes to decide on the 35mm anamorphic format to tell the story. "Because the online video elements were important, we wanted a stark contrast between that and the real world," says Campos. "Anamorphic was the perfect medium to create a beautiful world in which the characters live. That contrast helped to emphasize the two different worlds."

For Lipes and first AC Joe Anderson, testing was crucial to determine the scope of working on the edge with anamorphic lenses. "There are a couple of scenes that were lit just with the computer screen," he says. "We did some tests at Technicolor and

"We also value the analog aesthetic of a photochemical finish"

found that we could close the aperture down to 2.8 if the actors were really close to the screen. However in some situations, due to the small lighting package, we shot wide open."

Lipes used one ARRI 535 camera, a couple 4K HMIs, some Kino Flos, and a small tungsten lighting package from Eastern Effects in Brooklyn. For day interior and night exterior and interior scenes, Lipes used KODAK VISION2 500T 5218 film, and KODAK VISION2 250D 5205 film for the exterior day shots.

"Choosing stocks that were as similar as possible was important for Tony because we had no plans for a DI (digital intermediate)," he cites. "We also value the analog aesthetic of a photochemical finish. Anamorphic is so crisp that to put it through a process where the images get degraded, even just a little bit, didn't seem fair to the format," adds Campos. "For our first film, there was something special about doing it as purely as possible."

Technicolor developed the film and recorded the conformed negative onto Kodak print film. "Thanks to ARRI, Kodak, and Joe Dunton Cameras (JDC), as well as the talented cast and crew, the ridiculous idea of shooting *Afterschool* on 35mm with anamorphic lenses actually became a reality," Mond remarks.

"I think it's important for any director to be as involved as much as possible and to constantly be learning," Campos concludes. "When you collaborate, you learn more and figure things out. Other people may have ideas for you from past experiences, and you always need options. That's the key to making good films."