

David Boyd explores a new idea in filmmaking for television

***Beyond* is a Fox television pilot that follows scientists to a remote Inuit family living on the North Slope of Alaska. It turns out the family was killed by a meteorite, and the scientists soon determine that there's a second one on the way. This time, earth's fate hangs in the balance.**

Cinematographer David Boyd knew that the 14-day shoot for *Beyond* would be grueling. The filmmakers planned to recreate the Arctic in the deep snow and bitter cold in the mountains of Utah. Given the snow-white environments, Boyd also wanted a stock that was virtually grainless. Those requirements led him to choose KODAK VISION2 HD Color Scan Film 5299.

"I was interested in using one stock for the entire show, so we wouldn't have to change mags and keep track of various stocks under such trying circumstances," says Boyd.

KODAK VISION2 HD Color Scan Film 5299 is part of the KODAK VISION2 HD System, a hybrid technology that uses a scan-only film to capture an extremely broad range of visual information. Once that information is brought into the digital realm, cinematographers use the KODAK VISION2 HD Digital Processor to match the tone, color and other characteristics of almost any Kodak color negative film. "

"We did an interesting series of tests using the system," says Boyd. "We shot one scene and then used the processor to time it five or six different ways. We were able to arrive at an ominous and foreboding look for the show.

"I also shot a white card and rated the film at a variety of exposures," he says. "That way I could see which speed resulted in the least grain. I learned that there's a sweet spot at around 160 ASA, and that's where we rated the film for our day exteriors."

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KODAK VISION2 HD Color Scan Film 5299 can be rated at a wide range of ASA settings. "For our interior work, I usually rated it at 320 ASA," says Boyd. "I've heard of other cinematographers rating it as high as 1,000 or even 2,000 and getting good results."

The digital processor is provided to the post house specified by the cinematographer. Boyd fine-tuned the look in the normal way, during secondary color correction at Level 3 in Los Angeles.

"In our case, once we had determined the general looks for the show, the digital processor was used mostly as a time-saver for the dailies color timer," says Boyd. "This system is a very valuable tool for producers who want the best-looking images at the lowest cost. We bury these post professionals with material; and the ability to hit a button and immediately bring the images to a starting point much closer to my design is a big help."

The filmmakers almost always used two cameras to cover action. Boyd used clear and blue saran wrap over the lens to add a frosty feel to some exterior scenes.

Some night exteriors were lit with handheld flares, flashlights, and metal halide work lights. The lights were often handheld, and lens flares were welcomed. Boyd used the stock and the post process to handle the wide variety of color temperatures gracefully.

Boyd says the system allowed him more creative freedom on the set and in the suite. "I gave up nothing in terms of control," he says. "In fact, I had more options regarding the look. The realities of television production are here to stay. We go fast and it needs to look wonderful the first time. There can be no mistakes. Cinematographers often need to respond to last-minute changes in the writing very quickly. The VISION2 HD System allowed me to concentrate on doing good work, and lighting well. I felt confident in making it look unique and intriguing to the audience. I didn't have to flag a light if I knew I could control it in post, and I didn't have to spend time and energy nursing through all the discussions having to do with look, because we had determined it beforehand."