

Digawel commercial shot on film for “off-TV”

Film Stocks

KODAK VISION2 500T 7218 (night scenes) KODAK VISION2 50D 7201 (other conditions)



As the world embraces new ways to communicate, Japanese clothing and accessories store, Digawel is at the cutting-edge with a new experimental advertising format referred to as “off-TV”. Titled, *Ana o horu otoko* (literally, the man who digs a hole), the promotional film bypasses television to communicate the store’s philosophy and world-view online.

The concept of an “off-TV commercial”, coined from the expression “off-Broadway”, was inspired by TV commercial director, Naoki Imamura who mused, “Wouldn’t it be nice if the creative team proposed ad concepts to the advertiser, instead of the other way around?” And “Isn’t there a place for promotional films that are not intended for TV in the first place?”

The stylised format extends creativity beyond the usual Japanese 15-second spot for TV. In some cases, films as long as three minutes are posted on-line. The concept draws on the hope that the shared vision of aspiring creative professionals and advertisers can lead to great work that makes an impact.

Directed by Imamura, *Ana o horu otoko* was shot almost entirely handheld in 16mm, using an ARRI SR3 camera. Cinematography was by Mikio Hasui the multi-talented director, photographer and cinematographer. “We shot in 16mm for budget reasons and used KODAK VISION2 500T 7218 for night scenes and KODAK VISION2 50D 7201 in other conditions,” recalls Hasui. “The 50D film keeps images soft and natural-looking, even when intercut with 250D footage. It’s wonderful, and offers a wide exposure latitude.”

Highly-experienced, Hasui is very familiar with Japanese aesthetics. “If you’re looking for a refined touch, you seek images that are flat and subdued and so outside scenes were shot with 250D (KODAK VISION2 250D 5205/7205), and we converted to daylight with 100T (KODAK VISION2 5212/7212). However as a high-speed film, 250D is not exactly the right choice when I want a lower T-stop, even if I use an ND9, which is why the 50D is such a great film; because of the freedom it offers.”

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Although he has recently worked with HD digital capture, Hasui remains passionate about the subtlety and nuance of film. “The image quality of HD is great, but somehow, it just doesn’t feel right to me,” reflects Hasui. “I sense that its because colors seem too pure. Take orange, for example. Digitally, orange is pure orange, but on film, orange includes all the elements of color present. In shadowy images on film, orange becomes thicker, so to speak, until we reach the black end of the spectrum. Digitally, you can get black by reducing brightness and saturation. In other words, analog black is a complex mixture of chromatic elements while digital black is a color with “0” code value. There’s not much difference between these blacks in isolation, but there’s an undeniable difference in tonal gradation. And I think because our eyes can sense this difference, something doesn’t feel quite right.”

“Of course, it’s convenient that we can review images then and there in HD, but this leaves no time to let the images form a deeper impression on me, which I value as a cinematographer. If the negative doesn’t match what was originally in mind before shooting, film provides the option of adjusting images later, in telecine. With HD, we can review footage immediately on a monitor and if the video engineer performs a color correction on the spot, the advertiser thinks we’re done. We risk losing the opportunity for further editing. Film is one of the great inventions of the 20th century and I will stick to using it.”

You can view the off-TV commercial, *Ana o horu otoko* online at: <http://www.liverary.com/off-cm/>
M.Hasui’s web site is : <http://www.mhasui.com>