

# Domino's spot

## connects viewers to The Dark Knight

In addition to being a great movie, Christopher Nolan's recent Batman film *The Dark Knight* was also a marketing juggernaut. One of the many tie-ins was a series of commercials for Domino's Pizza. When advertising agency Crispin Porter + Bogusky asked Sam Bayer to direct and shoot a Domino's spot with visual echoes of the feature film, Bayer didn't hesitate.

"I told them I wanted to make something that looks filmic, and not just another cheap commercial that is a pale imitation of a movie," says Bayer.

Bayer has a background as a fine art painter. His breakthrough project was the

"Knowing exactly what was going to happen in the shadows was a big help on the shoot."

milestone video for Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit*, which MTV considers one of the most influential videos ever made. He went on to work with such artists as The Rolling Stones, Sheryl Crow, John Lee Hooker, Metallica, David Bowie, Aerosmith, and Lenny Kravitz, among others. His video for Green Day's *Boulevard of Broken Dreams* swept the MTV music awards in 2005, garnering seven Moon Men including Best Director, Best Cinematography, and Best Rock Video. He has been equally successful directing and shooting high-end commercials campaigns for Coke, Pepsi, Nissan, and Lexus. He has collected awards from the AICP for Nike's *If You Let Me Play* and Packard Bell's *Home* spot. His work on Mountain Dew *Showstopper* earned 2001 Clio Awards for Best Direction and Best Cinematography.

The Domino's spot shows a pizza delivery person eluding pursuers to make an on-time delivery. Along the way, we see stunts, explosions and costumes that are similar to those worn by villains in the film, which was photographed by Wally Pfister, ASC. The camera swoops around and through the action in a manner reminiscent of the feature film's intense car chase sequences.

Bayer chose to shoot the spot on KODAK VISION3 500T 5219 film. "Knowing exactly what was going to happen in the shadows was a big help on the shoot," says Bayer. "I was trying to give it a moody, cinematic feel and I knew we'd have some information in the blacks without overlighting. Less is more. The 5219 is an amazing stock that really digs into the shadows."



Bayer notes that the combination of filmed images and digital technology gives him the widest range of options. "I used to skip bleach or cross-process, but with today's digital post technologies, you can manipulate film in so many different ways," he remarks. "You can make something look like print, change the color spectrum, et cetera. I capture the basics on the set and create a lot of the look in the telecine bay."

The simplicity of film also appeals to Bayer. "I'm like a caveman with a light meter," he muses. "I don't want to get bored or bogged down with the technical stuff. I work from my gut. I think that's why I became a cinematographer – not because I thought I could do it better than anyone else, but because I knew I wanted to do it my way. Film allows me to work intuitively."

"I love the organic aspects I can get with film, whether it is grain, or the way the film responds to light flaring on the lens," Bayer adds. "I understand why people are interested in HD, but there's something timeless and really pleasing about film. When people ask me why I prefer film, I can't really describe it. I don't have some detailed technical response. It's more of an emotional response. It's in my heart. I like hearing the motor and the film going through the gate."

"I operated an HD camera once, and it's like having a race car without an engine. I'm always a little suspect when someone is telling me that HD is great and that it looks just like film. Why not just shoot film? When you're trying to emulate something else, there's something fundamentally wrong, and I think it becomes more complicated."

Bayer is currently prepping to direct two feature films.

To hear more of Bayer's thoughts on filmmaking and why he refuses to compromise, go to [www.kodak.com/go/motion](http://www.kodak.com/go/motion).