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## *In Case of Emergency*

**Main picture:** (L to R) Actors Jonathan Silverman and David Arquette in a scene from *In Case of Emergency*, shot by cinematographer Dave Perkal.

ABC's *In Case of Emergency* is a single camera comedy about four childhood friends reunited by a crisis who learn that their lives didn't turn out quite as they expected. The pilot had been shot with a Genesis HD camera, but cinematographer Dave Perkal convinced the producers that the Super 16 film format would offer more convenience and creative flexibility within the tight budget and schedule constraints of television production.

"When you have to move fast, and all of a sudden you're outside, you don't have time to fly huge diffusion, film is the best choice," says Perkal. "TV is definitely a grind and everybody knows you have to keep pace and make the day. You're moving at twice the speed of features. You go inside to outside, and you need the latitude of film."

Perkal makes extensive use of speed changes, smash cuts and power zooms within shots to emphasize story points.

"Speed changes are simple with film, and in video they are still in their infancy," he says. "The Genesis is a good tool when it's appropriate. But film has an organic texture that you can't replicate with video, which has a plastic sheen."

"When producers ask me, I explain that film is a two-step process," he says. "Light passes through a lens and affects the silver halide to form a latent image. Video is a three-step process where light passes through, is interpreted by a man-made chip, and the information is then laid down to a tape. The chip is the weak link that they're always trying to improve upon. Film is a natural organic process."

Another advantage according to Perkal is the range of tools available after the film has been exposed. "You can push, pull or cross process, overexpose, print down or up," he says. "All these tool are available, and if you were trying to achieve those effects by manipulating a video camera on the set, it takes valuable time."

Perkal shoots with an ARRI SR 3 camera mounted with Cooke S4 lenses originally designed for the 35mm format. He uses KODAK VISION2 500T 7218 film for night exteriors and most stage work, and KODAK VISION2 250D 7205 for the rest. The look for *In Case of Emergency* is natural and realistic.

"I'm trying to create a real place for the actors to go," says Perkal. "Nothing is forced or contrived or conspicuous. I think the film palette lends itself to that." ■