

Cinematographer David Klein, director/writer/actor James Franco and co-writer Merriwether Williams have collaborated on a number of projects over the past five years, with their most recent project, **Good Time Max**, always in the back of their minds. The story follows two brothers who are blessed with powerful intellects but take drastically different paths. One brother becomes successful in

data-only format that captures as much information as possible from the negative. Those HDSR files act as a more affordable digital intermediate. After some color correction, a second version of the images was output to DigiBeta for dailies and editing. After editing, the HDSR files will act as a master for conforming, and those images will be color-corrected and output to anamorphic 35mm prints.

Good Time Max:

Shooting Super 16 for Anamorphic Finish

the medical world, but the other follows a drug-fueled, hedonistic existence and is eventually living on the street.

"We wanted to communicate that these were men who were creating their own worlds by the decisions they made," says Klein, whose credits include **Clerks**, **Chasing Amy**, **Mallrats**, **Tattoo: A Love Story** and **The Ape**. "We wanted the movie to have a very realistic and natural feel, so we didn't get into anything too stylized. We created these environments and let the characters work within them."

The filmmakers knew from the beginning that film was the right medium for the story. "We knew this movie required a different approach," says Klein. "We loved the grain in the final product, and I needed the reliability and latitude of film to produce the images I envisioned."

Good Time Max followed an unusual production path. The images were captured in the Super 16mm film format, but framed for a center extracted 2.35:1 aspect ratio. These images were then scanned at LaserPacific to HDSR, a 4:4:4

Klein says that the 2.35 reduces the size of the Super 16 frame to 4% smaller than a regular 16mm frame, which is significant. Klein augmented the grainy, gritty aesthetic by handholding the camera (either an ARRI SR3 or an Aaton A-Minima) for almost the entire movie. He chose to shoot more than half the movie using a fast stock, Kodak VISION2 500T 7218 film.

"I wouldn't generally use a 500-speed film in Super 16, but we loved the grain it produced," he says. "Most of the night exterior work was pushed a stop to add contrast and grain. We used a lot of the Kodak VISION2 250D 7205 and Kodak Vision 200T 7274 films also, and they cut together seamlessly even after all the post processes we put them through."

Klein says he didn't have to alter his shooting technique significantly. "I lit to the same contrast I normally would have for an optical finish," he says. "Usually I overexpose a bit, but that won't really do much for you when you're going to a digital intermediate. Everything was

handheld and very free. We lit spaces and let the actors work within those spaces, but when we got into close-ups our approach became more traditional."

For purposes of comparison, Klein asked to see a reel of **Chasing Amy**, a film he photographed in the 1990s using a previous generation of Kodak film stocks (EXR) and an optical Super 16-to-35mm blow-up process. "Grain-wise, the images were quite similar," he says.

Klein and his collaborators were grateful for the expert assistance of Doug Jaqua at LaserPacific. "We looked at a lot of tests, and we were guided through the process by the people at Laser," says Klein. "We looked at a film that had been done using a similar method (**Irreversible**) but when we saw our tests, it was the first time we saw the results output to film and projected. We were thrilled. Franco leaned over to me and said, 'We should shoot all of our films this way.'" ■



Above: (L to R) 1st AC Paul Maletich, Director/actor James Franco and DP David Klein preparing to shoot a scene in the bathroom for *Good Time Max*.

Below: (Far left) DP David Klein preparing to shoot a scene including Director-Actor James Franco (white shirt) from the film.

