

David Klein focuses on DI for *Good Time Max*



Film stocks
KODAK VISION2 500T 5218, 250D 7205 and 200T 7217

Digital Intermediate
LaserPacific inDI™

Good Time Max explores the intricacies of a troubled relationship between two equally intelligent brothers. Max and Adam had a close connection during their childhoods. Adam lives up to his potential and becomes a successful surgeon. Max is a self-indulgent drug addict with a hedonistic lifestyle who ends up living on the streets.

It was an ambitious endeavor for James Franco, who co-authored the script, directed the film and portrayed Max. It was Franco's third collaboration with cinematographer David Klein.

Franco and Klein decided to produce *Good Time Max* in Super 16 format as a concession to a modest budget, while composing in a 2.4:1 aspect ratio. That meant they would be using a negative that was four percent smaller than a regular 16mm frame. Klein shot a test and went to an anamorphic 35mm film-out to demonstrate that this approach wouldn't compromise their intentions.

"We completed principal photography in 25 days, mainly at practical locations in Los Angeles, with a week on sets, including a bar, an office and the lobby outside of a courtroom," he says. "On wider shots, we lit the spaces and gave the actors freedom to move."

Klein's principal photography portrays the brothers during several years of their adult lives. He made ample use of a handheld camera, including tracking shots with the actors as they moved through sets and locations. Depending upon the scene, Klein used an Aaton A-Minima or an ARRI SR-3 camera, Cooke S4 primes, and chose from a palette of KODAK VISION2 7218 (500T), 7205 (250D) and 7217 (200T) color negative films.

"There was an up-front decision to time the film in a digital intermediate (DI) environment, which would allow us to record out onto 35mm film for cinema release," Klein says. "That decision also saved us precious time on set, since I knew that we could do little things like flagging lights

off walls in DI rather than during production."

Klein documented each set-up with digital still pictures. He manipulated selected images with a personal computer to provide visual references of his intentions for dailies timer Tim Vincent at LaserPacific in Los Angeles. The cinematographer indicated his intentions for manipulating subtle differences in colors, contrast and grain.

Klein timed the film with LaserPacific DI colorist David Cole in HDSR 4:4:4 format, utilizing the facility's proprietary inDI™ process. Klein describes the DI as an interactive process with images projected on a 33-foot-wide screen in a cinema-like environment.

"Max's scenes were meant to be somewhat harsher, with slightly desaturated colors and a bit more contrast," Klein explains. "It's kind of a bleach by-pass look with brighter highlights and occasional blown out windows. In contrast, Adam's environment looks and

feels softer and more comfortable, but it's not blatant or obvious.

"David (Cole) and I were able to communicate with a kind of verbal shorthand after we set the look during the first day and a half," he continues.

Cole says that they had budgeted to complete the DI in about 40 hours with the first few days dedicated to color correction for continuity. He cites examples of fine tuning, including a beach scene filmed on an overcast day where Klein made the sky bluer in DI, and other shots where he isolated skin tones and made them warmer or cooler.

"We also tweaked some scenes to intensify the bleach by-pass look and make the grain coarser," he says. "David also asked me to reduce reflections in windows in a jailhouse scene, and to blend a few visual effects shots with live-action film."

Good Time Max premiered in April at the Tribeca Film Festival in Manhattan.